The International Crosby Circle Presents

BING

Edited by REG BRISTO

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The INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR

"BING"

The ICC's Official Quarterly Magazine

BING

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A WELCOME TO ALL NEW READERS!

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Reference to advertisements: these are printed in good faith but it is up to members to satisfy themselves in advance that they are achieving a mutually satisfactory deal.

Errata this issue: top of p.10 the word should be "read" and not "ready"!

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STOP PRESS!

SPECIAL ADDITION TO "KEEPING TRACK" by BERT BISHOP :: COVERING THE ALBUM..... "THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT"

United Artists: Cat. No. UAG29730. Price: £2.70p

13 Tracks: Release Date: 29.8.75

Readers have already had an excellent preview of almost 50 percent of this new album via the radio and, especially, The Parkinson TV Show but posterity demands its full review-treatment here. Whether this album by Bing is taken in or out of context of his professional status, and near to 50 years of recording, only the hyper-critical would deny that it is the work of a past and present master of popular singing. One listen through will establish that. Three or four more and you find yourself saying "this is the Ol' Groaner all right!" Perfect diction, range better than it has been for a couple or three years or more; pitch - well, Bing always hit the right note, and tone still strong and resonant in the low to middle range and adequate in the upper register. Around b flat and above Bing's voice has nearly always been a head voice with a subsequent loss of characteristic timbre and at this stage one could hardly expect any significant change by way of improvement. However, he has always coped by compromise - and it still works for him. The publicity in the UK at least will have been sufficient to put him back in public favour again. The tracks are:

Side 1:
1. That's What life is All About.
2. Breezin' Along with the Breeze.
3. No Time at All.
4. I Love to Dance Like They Used to Dance.
5. Have a Nice Day.
* 6. The Pleasure of Your Company - intro. Roamin' in the Gloamin'.

Side 2:
1. The Best Things in Life are Free.
2. Some Sunny Day.
3. Bon Vivant.
* 4. Good Companions - and Points Beyond
5. Send in the Clowns.
6. The Good old Times.
7. That's What Life is All About. (Reprise).

* With Johnny Mercer.

Only one of the songs has been recorded by Bing before - SOME SUNNY DAY cut with Bob Scobey and his Frisco Jazz Band back in 1957 so basically it is all new material for Bing. And mostly the songs take a strong philosophical line and we are familiar with the title song. Track 2 of Side 1 is a good old standard so suited to Bing that it is a wonder he has not recorded it before - as he remarked on the Parkinson Show. There are some testing high notes but taken overall one can say that Bing copes. The musical arrangement is something of an enigma - can't quite make up its mind and comes down bordering on "bop"! However, it is sandwiched between two excellent tracks for the third one, NO TIME AT ALL, is more in Bing's range and is definitely his style. Lyric is good and being of modern construction can't be the easiest song to sing. The accompaniment is "sweeter", too.

Bing puts more into the fourth track on this album version than he did on TV - indeed, this applies to most of the numbers featured in the Parkinson Show - and understandably, for the finished product of the album was carefully selected and "produced" and the balance and accoustics are bound to be superior. I LOVE TO DANCE etc. is not philosophic but highly nostalgic and an excellent song impossible to find fault with. "HAVE A NICE DAY" is, of course, a different (and better) song than the one Bing sang on the BING 'N' BASIE album. Its a catchy song, modern and a lovely tempo. Bing does it in excellent style and there may be those who feel he could have been better served without what is the only "chorus" accompaniment on this collection. This song certainly grows on you if it doesn't happen to spark straightaway.

Side Two gets away with another oldie; a real favourite with vocalists and orchestras alike. This version is a good arrangement with a good steady tempo, redolent perhaps of the old days and it suits Bing to a "T". Its so melodic that again one wonders how it was that Bing hadn't done it before - but thankful that now he has. He handles the high notes with aplomb, and as a straightforward lively ballad Bing's vocalising and Pete Moore's accompaniment would certainly take some beating. Worth noting that it is the same line-up as for "NO TIME AT ALL". Irving Berlin's "SOME SUNNY DAY" comes out very well on the second time around for Bing; he sounds hardly any different to 20 years ago. Well, perhaps that half-a-tone he talks of....the significant variance is the accompaniment - which is modern without being modern jazz and is highly pleasing.

It can be imagined that Bing had a lot of fun with "BON VIVANT" (one who lives well!) It sparkles with good humour and lends itself to some saucy "ad-libbing" within the confines

of the studio! Johnny Mercer's lyrics are again outstandingly inventive and Bing is in top form with "have song - will travel". The two of them join forces for the second duet, GOOD COMPANIONS, introducing "AND POINTS BEYOND". Most readers will know that this and the other duet, were recorded with rhythm accompaniment only in Los Angeles last autumn, the full accompaniment being added in London. Both are "situation" duets from the show "GOOD COMPANIONS". They provide likeable pieces of harmonising by the two veteran duettists and lace it with some "British" references, e.g. Secombe, Milligan - and even a piece of cricket. For Peter Diffley, no doubt!

> IT IS DIFFICULT TO WRITE ABOUT "SEND IN THE CLOWNS" without resort to overworked superlatives. Sondheim's poignant ballad will establish itself as one of the great standards; and Bing's recording - vocal and accompaniment alike - will also be a standard by which any other version must be judged.

Suffice to say that it could be a long, long, time before you hear a better fusion of talent creatively and so musically exploited. This track elevates the LP to a standard which transcends all expectations - and they were high to begin with. And I feel it was a masterstroke to supplant the original Side 2 Track 5 (RAZZLE DAZZLE) with this number.

Ken Barnes and Pete Moore have jointly composed and written a very likeable number in "THE GOOD OLD TIMES". It has an early-50's show tune touch about it; not easy to define but it took me back to that era of quality West End productions. We have the full orchestral line-up taking a piece of the action but at no time overiding Bing's strong vocal which is at its most deceptively casual to the greatest effect. It was an excellent idea to reprise the title song right at the end, making a glorious finale. A different lyric of course and it all ends on quite a musically dramatic climax. A fine finish to a really special album, from a most remarkable man and a fine supporting team.

Ken has also contrived a very fine sleeve in which to house the LP. The basic colour is rich mahogany - in fact, the rear has the wood-grain effect. Full credits are graciously given, including one to Leslie Gaylor and various members of the ICC, together with Reg Bristo's address as Secretary. Bing is seen seated beside an organ which pre-dates this century. A remarkable coup was accomplished by getting that extraordinary broadcaster and writer Alistair Cooke in the role of sleeve notes writer - a rather mundane description perhaps for here are some 750 words in a five paragraph tribute to Bing over the 50 years Alistair just happens to have been listening to him. This most engaging broadcaster paid a spoken tribute to Bing in his "Letter from America" programme nearly 30 years ago and it is most apposite that this unique albym should merit his attention.

> Finally, there are twenty-one photographs and film-stills of Bing with 29 fellow artists ranging from Fred Astaire to Andy Williams, not forgetting his most recent duetting partner - Michael Parkinson. A handsome collection among which is a little seen picture of Bing with Shirley Bassey.... It is truly an outstanding album in every conceivable way.

Editor: There it is, for the record - to coin a phrase! Actually, Bert has managed to remain considerably more objective than I feel I would have done! The reason for Ken Barnes's enthusiasm those months ago is readily understood now. And having had the good fortune to have been in the studio when Bing was recording I still stand slightly amazed that such a conglomeration of equipment, cables, musicians, glass partions, frightening control-panels and the like can be co-ordinated into such a coherent and exciting cascade of sound. For my money, this album is streets ahead of the BING 'N' BASIE album, and I feel my insistence that Bing in any case sounds better singing with the orchestra than in dubbing over accompaniments is justified for ever more! As for the number that Bert particularly singles out, "SEND IN THE CLOWNS", we are certainly at one there for this number really "knocks me out".... And talking of being singled out, I cannot help feeling that if this had been issued as a single it would more quickly have reached the peak it undoubtedly will reach. A word to those readers who are impatiently asking why all three new albums cannot be issued simultaneously. Well, is it ever wise to flood any market? And if that isn't commercial sense enough - let's space our delights.

> It only remains to add that some "KEEPING TRACK" items have had to be held over - but you will see further on of the reissue of EL SENOR BING - and the issue of THE VERY BEST OF BING (7-albums) BY WORLD RECORDS LTD.

"BING" - Official Organ of the International Crosby Circle.... ....No. 39. Sept. 1975.

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(Frontispiece. Bert Bishop)

A musician friend of your Editor, in Ayrshire, and NOT a member of ICC. was called in by the small outfit at the Turnberry Clubhouse ...they were desperate to play "BLUE OF THE NIGHT" on Bing's entrance but had no arrangement! My friend John soon sketched one out..... He did NOT say whether he included a Crosby vocal!

Keep the requests going to the BBC for tracks from the new album: SEND IN THE CLOWNS is a nice choice...and could reach the top! And the title song, naturally....

And don't forget local radio, and get your letters in your local papers about this fantastic new Crosby record...

The new biography, BING, by Charles Thompson, was advertised as being published by W.H. ALLEN, price £3.95, in The Sunday Times, Sept. 7 but a copy is not yet to hand.

Regretfully, we do not have any further news on the stupendous announcement in The Sun newspaper about Bing hiring a theatre to give a concert to his British fans for 50p!! A mind-boggling thought, but enquiries to the Sun writer have brought the response that it is in the "think" stage with Bing.....and in this connection I have a heart-cry from our great friend LESLIE GAYLOR: Leslie is feeling the financial effect of this tremendous Bing summer and begs people writing to him to enclose a stamped, addressed, envelope. He will also always do his best to reply. We think that's the least than can be done for Leslie.

AND NOW WE'RE GETTING ANGUISHED LETTERS FROM YORKSHIRE READERS WHO WERE CHAGRINED TO READ IN THE PAPERS THAT BING CASUALLY DROPPED INTO A YORKSHIRE PUB, BOUGHT A ROUND, AND GAVE SOME VOCAL ENTERTAINMENT! .....AND THEY DIDN'T KNOW!

That's the kind of fantastic Crosby year its been! And in the following pages every effort has been made to try and do justice to the many facets surrounding Bing's, surely, most momentous visit ever to Britain. Our Editorial tries to give that impression..... But, in giving our warmest thanks to all correspondents for their thought and enthusiasm, we must ask some forgiveness for our sins of omission.

AND NOW! THIS YEAR'S MEETING/PARTY WILL BE ON ---- SUNDAY OCTOBER 19th !!

To mark the 25th anniversary of "modern" Crosbyana THERE WILL BE A DINNER AND MEETING AT THE MANSION HOTEL - ROUNDHAY PARK, LEEDS 8
3pm until 10.30pm.

DINNER: 5pm. Tickets: £2.95p.

Bar open after dinner and an amplifying system will be available for plenty of our usual music. Starting at 3 o'clock there will be the usual welcome to members, and the now-usual address by your Secretary (and Editor!), requests, film features &c. And a whisper has it that there is a distinct possibility that our great friend KEN BARNES may put in an appearance! Write to MICHAEL CRAMPTON, 19 Carrholm Crescent Chapel Allerton, Leeds, LS7 2NL (West Yorks) for your reservations, and also mention your "request" record for Mick Drury's celebrated tape of same! Perhaps the price this year reflects inflation - but not too badly! Do not delay for firm arrangements MUST be made immediately. To new members asking WHY LEEDS(?) .....its a long story!

EDITORIAL

Well, where do we START? Aye, that's the rub...so much has happened...

Let's start with a good, old-fashioned rhetorical question - a rhetorical question, of course, being one that doesn't really need an answer. So, who would have believed, in this year of 1975, who COULD have believed, that Mr. Crosby, after his so-serious illness at the beginning of 1974, would be in this country, making his longest and perhaps his most happy, successful, and BUSY visit?

Nobody could have dreamed it. But he has! And its a fair bet that more people than ever before can now tell their stories of "How I met Bing", or "I SAW Bing!", "Bing signed my album...." "Bing chatted to me...." Happily, a very large number of ICC members have enjoyed the rare privilege of at last meeting the maestro - and almost without exception, judging by the mail and the stories that have descended on me in an avalanche - all found it an overwhelming experience. The experience, in fact, they always dreamed it would be.....

Naturally, Scottish readers (and Sassenachs penetrating North of the Border, taking the Road to Turnberry - or is it Turnbury?)- were first off the mark for it was to the much-loved golf courses of Bonnie Scotland that Bing visited first. And what a reception Bing got there! They may not be able to play football (only the bagpipes) but they certainly know how to let Bing realise that far from forgotten, he is held in as much esteem and respect as ever.

Then, no doubt to Scottish dismay, Bing came South...of the Border and things really swelled to a crescendo. Bing on the box, Bing on the radio, Bing popping up all over the newspapers, Bing with Fred Astaire, Bing with Vera Lynn, Jack de Manio, Terry Wogan...and goodness knows how many "special" correspondents from the newspapers; Bing with his new single taken from the eagerly-awaited Ken Barnes album.....Bing, Bing, Bing.....

What an intoxicating few months it has been....and with every prospect of Britain continuing to see much more of Bing than we have ever done before, for "undisclosed sources" have whispered there are hopes that Bing may be induced into undertaking more recording sessions here.

Certainly, we can take satisfaction, I feel, that given the chance, Britain did Bing proud. He left for the time being surely glowing with the warmth of his reception - aye, even bearing in mind he has known it all all over the world for years and years. This time he was left in no doubt at all that virtually EVERYONE here loves and values him. Not teenage "popsters" alone - and not the "old-codgers" who remember the 30s alone.....but everyone.

So often Bing made the remark: "Go along, you're too young to know ME!" He was shown in no uncertain terms that no-one here was too young, or too old, NOT to Know Bing!

There are so many lovely experiences to tell that we fear there may be some overlapping, some duplication - but who will care? They have little differences. On only one count are they all the same: BING WAS GREAT!

SURELY WE MUST START WITH THE SHOW THAT HAS, BY THE TIME YOU ARE READING THIS, BEEN SEEN BY MILLIONS: AND WE ARE IN THE VERY HAPPY POSITION OF BEING ABLE TO GIVE AUTHENTIC REPORTS FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE CAMERAS, by which I mean we present reports of how the show appeared when actually been performed in the Shepherds Bush TV Theatre of the BBC and later on, how it appeared on screen at home....

THE PARKINSON TV SHOW

Scores of our members woke up on the morning of 18 July last knowing that, barring some exceptional circumstance, that they would be realising an ambition of many years' standing - that of seening Bing in person! A wondrous prospect indeed. Our first reporter didn't just leave it for the event - he made a day of it!

"HEY! WHERE'S MY CAR?" ASKED BING - AND I LED HIM TO IT !

Reports: JOHN BIGNELL

Remember those long-lost days of childhood when you would wake up with a feeling of inner excitement and the sure knowledge that it was going to be one of those really GREAT days - like Christmas Day, when you had good reason to believe that Santa Claus really had brought that new train set, or that lovely, wavy-haired, talking doll? Or a birthday when you KNEW you were, at last, going to get that shiny new bike? It all came back to me on the morning of Friday, 18th July, 1975. At 8am in came Mrs. B, tea-tray and morning paper in her hands and the command WAKE UP! IT'S BING DAY - AT LAST! Oh yes, we were well organised in our house.....

Yes, it all came back to me then - this was the day we were actually going to meet the one, true, living legend himself. And all I had to do was, somehow, to get through the bours until the Television Theatre doors opened at 5.30pm...that's all. And I well remember how the count-down went on that fabulous day:

8.30am: My wife off to work, myself up and about, performing the normal toiletries of washing, shaving - and prepare for morning round...even insurance agents go out to work sometimes, and even on a day like this! Back from round, so far so good - had a great time chatting to several clients about my forthcoming evening engagement and discovered all over again that practically EVERYone is genuinely interested in Bing, even if they are not all entirely Crosby cranks, like us...and the papers were already telling us just how popular Bing is....

11.am. Home again...coffee for one; check the "takings" and make up the books.... some correspondence to attend to, accompanied by Bing and the Andrews Sisters (Vol. 2, to be precise) ....excellent company.

12 noon: A little early for lunch so a special treat - let's have the Pelican LP - SOFT LIGHTS AND SWEET MUSIC. Well, the time is passing...keep occupied and it won't drag too much...."All through the day I'm nervous, I'm restless and I'm fidgety" confides Bing, and that's just how I feel.....

1 pm: Attempt a light lunch - salad - not risking anything cooked lest I repeat the previous day's performance when grilling cheese on toast I forgot about the towel airing above the grill....came close to running for my fire insurance policy over that mishap....manage the salad. Pot of tea essential as the nerves begin to fray....

2pm: Clothes laid out, ICC tie prominent - I wonder how many of THOSE I will see today? Into the garden for a sunbathe, and I find myself sparing a thought

for all those less lucky than I who will, at that moment, be speeding by car, coach, or train from all points north, east, south and west to get to west London that evening.... Ten minutes later I'm sparing a thought for myself as the sunshine turns to rain. And I scamper indoors, deciding to give near-neighbour Pat Forster a ring to see how she is bearing up....cannot be worse than me, surely? Pat seems grateful for the call....then I think I detect impatience creeping in...Pat wants to get away, to be first in the queue - if humanly possible.

2.15pm Raining heavily, alas. Thunder and lightning overheard...no doubt it will clear up this humidity. Pick up my library book - a really fascinating one I was enjoying - and nearly managed to get Bing out of my mind for a little while...nearly....

3 pm. No further delay, no more procrastination...bathe, dress, grab raincoat... phone rings. I jump a yard...its my wife. Picking her up at four and "please bring my umbrella and my coat...."

3.50pm The big "off"...I'm away! Half-way to meeting Jean and I realise the umbrella's been left behind. Who cares?

4 pm. On way to the station, Jean driving, which is just as well the state of excitement I'm in; and she was quite understanding about the brolly..manage to park in side street...on to the Central Line train - straight to Shepherds Bush. Gee Whiz! We are actually going to SEE BING! This really was IT! Reach the theatre without mishap - to find already a sizeable queue, and one Pat Forster second...the rain stopped, the sun came out again. See ICC ties immediately... I'm Edward, from Islington..." I'm Alf Mutters from Hampshire... and we went on get acquainted. I looked around for the now-famous Leslie Gaylor...I expect he's already inside, opines Alf Mutters. And Alf was proved right....

5.20pm The queue has really grown, snaking away behind us....AND THEN THE DOORS are open, and its the 1930s kids' pictures on Saturday mornings all over again... but we're inside...gaze around for friend Pat....realise she is in the front row upstairs in the circle. Realise its an excellent vantage point and make our way up...so many with the same idea we never did get close to Pat...

The preliminaries are virtually over - except for the most superfluous gentleman in the whole country; I mean the chap who came on to test our "clapping ability". Most of us decline this futile exercise. Surely he must know that he's got nothing to worry about? That when the time comes and that familiar, well-loved, figure appears he will get the biggest ovation, the biggest welcome any audience can muster?

> Michael Parkinson is not normally one of our (my wife's and I) favourite personalities, but we were naturally feeling indulgent...he gave us some small banter, a tasteless joke about the carpet on which Bing was to walk... still, as I say, we were indulgent...and in any case, once Bing appeared nearly everyone - and everything - else was forgotten. But full marks to Michael Parkinson for paying tribute to Leslie Gaylor before the show proper started for his great efforts in getting the project under way... pity if Leslie and the ICC are not mentioned in the actual screening... would this, I wonder, be breaking some code of ethics?....

Doubtless, there will be other accounts of the impact of the show on members present; I am writing this four days afterwards and have only just recovered sufficiently to do so. And before I go any further, I know I am incapable of adequately describing what followed. And I know when I read it (with you) that I am going to say to myself:

> "That's totally niggardly....that just does not convey one-hundredth of the atmosphere, the excitement, the atmosphere....."

How can it? How can I? How could ANYONE?

But I'm going to try..... (cont.over.

Michael Parkinson made his introduction:

> BING'S ENTRANCE WAS MET WITH AN INVOLUNTARY, CONCERTED GASP OF PLEASURE AND SHEER DELIGHT. THE APPLAUSE WAS DEAFENING - AND IT WENT ON AND ON. DRESSED IN HIS BLUE BLAZER, LIGHT SLACKS, AND TAN SHOES, BING TOTALLY BELIED HIS SEVENTY-ODD YEARS. FOR THOSE LIKE PAT FORSTER AND SO MANY OF US WHO WERE PRESENT, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS,IT WAS, AND REMAINS, QUITE UNFORGETTABLE...THAT FIRST ELECTRIFYING APPEARANCE. WE EXPECTED IT TO BE...IT WAS.. AND IS... INDELIBLE...

Then the show itself; no less than six songs from Bing and a fund of reminiscences and anecdotes. It was noticeable that Parkinson had several pages of script in front of him - necessary no doubt - but that Bing had no notes whatever and spoke spontaneously and completely off-the-cuff, as it were, all the way through. Andexcept for one small slip when he switched from "unctious" to "urbane" when talking about Fred Astaire, he was word-perfect. Quite an astonishing display of virtuosity as regards elan, on-the-spot narration, humour and breadth of knowledge and character.

> A highlight was, of course, when Bing launched into his first song, BREEZING ALONG WITH THE BREEZE from the forthcoming album. This gave the show an upbeat-tempo from its earliest moments. Among the other songs were PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY, with son Harry, THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY with Parkinson, I LIKE TO DANCE LIKE THEY USED TO DANCE, SEND IN THE CLOWNS (this could well be a "smash-hit") and we had a fabulous bonus when Bing had to do THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT twice, after one false start!

The false-start itself demonstrated Bing's completely equable temperament. Pete Moore's excellent orchestra was playing a four-bar introduction but Bing misread it and came in late. Signs were made to him to stop and he quizzically enquired: "Something wrong?" Its a very short intro Bing, apologised Pete, I don't think it gives you time enough to get from your chair across stage to the microphone.....Bing was completely alive to the problem and humourously made a series of mock sprints from his seat to the centre of the stage amid much mirth and applause from the audience. These items will not, of course, be screened but they are a lasting memory for us who were lucky enough to be there.

Finally it was decided to make the intro eight-bars and the "take" went through to the end. But it appeared there were further problems - the orchestra had come in loud and strong for the last chorus and it was felt that Bing's voice had been partially drowned, though I must add at this stage he sounded very powerful indeed.

Now came some real Crosbyana: firstly, Bing explained to us what had happened - and typically be blamed himself for asking the orchestra to "pump it up". Whether that was so or not, how like him to put everyone at ease by shouldering the blame. Some lightning re-arrangements were by then going on (to the score that is) and while this was being fixed Bing sat casually astride his stool in the centre of the stage, dexterously juggling with the hand-mike - and launched into a little verse in rhyme to the opening bars of the song explaining what had occurred! He was in masterly form and yet it was all done with all the casual aplomb and absolute spontaneity which is Bing's hallmark. I hope someone either taped or remembered the words to this little impromptu song - it completely captivated everyone - the audience, orchestra, stage hands, technicians, and received a very big hand. Again, this won't be shown on TV - and what a pity! Bing regarded us with mock concern, shrugged, and said apologetically: "'Fraid we're gonna have to do it again" - and this "apology" brought more well-nigh frantic applause.....

All too soon the show was over; it had started at six and now it was seven-thirty. We could have stayed for hours and still have been not satisfied. What a privilege and genuine thrill to have been entertained in person by the greatest showbusiness superstar of them all, of this or any other era.

So the conclusion of my greatest day.....meeting Roy Chappell on the way out (cont.... of the theatre - again the tie effected the introductions and I made preliminary enquir-

ies about him doing a show for our football club (North Greenford F.C.)...there was a mass of people outside - and an excited hum of conversation. Those with long journeys in front of them began to disperse but a sizeable crowd remained with the obvious intention of catching, if possible, a glimpse of Bing on his way from the TV theatre.... a Rolls arrived and the interest quickened when young Nathaniel brought out some gear from the theatre and deposited it in the boot....the chauffeur volunteered the information that Bing was indeed a perfect gentleman - "two of us share driving him around when he's here and nothing perturbs him - even traffic jams when he is late for an appointment" - but Bing fooled us! After about 45 minutes, which passed as rapidly as five, he made an unpretentious appearance from a small door at the front of the theatre.... passed my wife Jean who was clutching a batch of LPs to be autographed (for several different people)...and headed for the car but as the car was invisible through the throng I could see he was headed for the boot! The least I could delightedly do was to take his arm saying "Its this way, Bing...." and got him to the door. And by this action I surely put the seal on Pat Forster's day for she was right by the car door; she turned and found herself gazing directly into those incredible blue eyes. I think it was more by luck than judgement that she didn't finish up in the back seat of the car with Bing!

I had time to pat his shoulder and say: "Thanks for a wonderful show Bing, and a safe journey..."...but the car didn't move off immediately and Bing carried on signing LPs photographs and other souvenirs from through the car window. Finally Bing did call a halt and the car moved off to waves and calls of thanks and good wishes. We were left to reflect, during Bing's immediate absence, on the show, on all that had happened ...and to wonder if we would ever see Bing again.....my wife and I took Pat Forster to a little Italian restaurant just across the way. Jean did the ordering for neither Pat nor I could focus on any old menu.....

> Like everyone else, perhaps, I found myself remembering little things which made it such an occasion: there was one tiny incident which occurred "off-screen" and won't be seen. It happened whilst the film clip of Bing and Fred Astaire dancing was being shewn. A make-up girl took the opportunity of Bing being "off-camera" of going across to him and lightly dabbing Bing's brow. For some reason, Parkinson seemed to almost push the girl away - but Bing was alive to his gesture and took hold of the girl's hand and kissed it! Surely Bing was easing any embarrassment she may have been feeling at Parkinson's rather brusque rejection?
>
> I asked Pat what she thought of the chap who throughout the show was indicating when we should applaud, and when it should die down..... "What chap?" she asked, genuinely puzzled. It transpired that from the moment Bing appeared until his final exit - to an incredible farewell - Pat's eyes never left him - and was quite oblivious to everyone else!

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Editor: An excellent piece of reporting from John, is it not? But, I asked Pat Forster if she would write us her impressions. At first she said "Oh, No! I couldn't do that!" And when I insisted she could, she did - and came up with the following:

WHEN THE BLUE OF HIS EYES MET THE GOLF OF HIS HAT !

by Pat Forster.

A 44-year-old dream came true for me on July 18 - and I resolved to arrive early, very early, at the theatre. This I did and was rewarded by getting a seat precisely in the centre of the very first row. The stage, or "set", was a grand sight, with Pete Moore's large orchestra ranged on three tiers and a gold-coloured carpeted ramp running down through the centre of the instrumentalists. I watched intently as the camera swung round towards the top of this ramp after Michael Parkinson had arrived and spoke his introduction...and there he was! Bing walked down the ramp, a jaunty, dapper figure in a dark-grey suit and a bow-tie, looking so familiar it was quite incredible. No words can adequately describe my feelings then, or throughout the show. Incredibly

familiar - and this was the first time I'd actually seen him.....but of course, I've seen him so many, many times in films, television. What I'm saying is, I suppose, that Bing looked precisely as I always expected him to look: alive, vital, extraordinarily pleasant ...alll those things we always knew Bing was. All the well-known mannerisms were there, the blowing out of the cheeks when he had safely negotiated the few steps down to the stage, his shoulders well back when singing, his feet keeping the beat, the slight gestures with the hands, his benign, half whimsical expression, as he surveyed the audience whilst singing. All there...

And like everyone all through the ages, the greatest impression I had were the power and richness of his voice yet with that air of complete relaxation coupled with his complete mastery during the whole show. One had heard of this from so many quarters over the years but it was fascinating to be there and actually experience it for oneself. And all with no script, no music!

We had songs and anecdotes; why, we even had some of the famous "fluffs" when he interpolated his own words to the lyrics - and when he and the orchestra parted company: "Why don't you all leave quietly by the side door?" and "They played too loudly there - thought they were doing 'Tannhauser'" and "Give me eight bars intro - I'm no greyhound."

After it was all over and we got outside, there at the kerbside was a large black Rolls. A young lad approached carrying cases &c. and I recognised Nathaniel and we were delighted to ask him for HIS autograph! Many took his picture, too. He's a pleasant, rather shy boy and seemed quite taken aback at all the fuss there was about his dad. I was right alongside the car, chatting to the chauffer who seemed so delighted with his job of driving Bing around "a real gentleman". Although the crowd was dense, it parted respectfully and as the chauffeur opened the door I saw the most brilliant mustard-yellow linen golf hat! Bing climbed in and was actually within inches of me and I had the temerity to pat him on the back! I have a lasting impression of a very tanned, mature but not OLD face, and the famous brilliant blue eyes - and those very sturdy shoulders.

Nathaniel climbed in the other side and as you might guess, records, books, pictures and goodness knows what else were passed in and Bing obliged with countless autographs. I then became aware of a gentle voice saying "Excuse me, please" and I looked around to see a tall young man beside me, trying to open the car-door. Apologising, I managed to push aside for young Harry to get in beside his great father. With Harry's arrival, the car began to move slowly away and people were calling out: "Thank you Bing!" "Come back soon, Bing!" and "Here's to the next 50 years!"

What a glorious finish to the day - and what a fine, happy, family trio they looked!

As I walked away from the theatre in the company of John and Jean Bignell (has he told HIS story I wonder!) I looked up a side-street and saw one solitary London policeman standing by, and I suddenly thought: Where were all the bodyguards, the strong-arm men? The answer was NOWHERE. Only two young lads looking after their father!

NOTE: And Pat said she couldn't write a story.....!

ROY CHAPPELL, the singer with A TOUCH OF THE BINGS, was thrilled to get tickets - and even more thrilled when KEN BARNES was so kind to him for Roy later found himself upstairs taking a drink with all the "executives" present. You may be interested to know that within two weeks of hearing THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT Roy had specially obtained a copy of the sheet music (again Ken Barnes) and was actually singing it in his act, making sure the big audiences were in no doubt "that this is Bing Crosby's great new single...make sure you buy it! For he is as good as ever...great Bing Crosby!" And in turn getting big hands for his version.....he happened, later on, to be passing Bing's dressing room as Bing emerged. "Which way did Harry go?" he asked Roy. Roy said it was to typically Bing he felt as if he was on a Road picture set - and answered: "He went thataway, Bing!" "Ah, that's the wrong way," said Bing, "he should have come out this door with me...." Another ambition - Roy's - realised, and deservedly so.....

Having ready Pat Forster's delightful story I'm wondering if our bit in the last issue about whether or not we were fair to the ladies of Crosbyana, or whether or not they were backard in writing, got home! Consider the following lovely letter from MRS. JOY HAWKINGS, of A hton, Bristol:

> I would like to say in your magazine if possible how much I enjoyed the Parkinson/Crosby show in London on July 18. Dare I say I am not an ardent Crosby fan although my husband is a fanatic. He belongs to the ICC - hence this letter. My husband has been trying to convert me to Crosby for 20-odd years with no success except to listen to the odd record or two.
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> But now, I think he has succeeded. CROSBY WAS FABULOUS! In fact, I got his autograph on his record, also those of his two sons, Harry and Nathaniel. Harry sang one song with him on the show - and the songs he sang, sid in all, were superb. We were lucky enough to be in the front row. I would also like to thank the ICC members I met outside the theatre, a fine lot. One gentleman gave me Bing's address, but I didn't ask his name. All I know about him is that he needs six 78s to complete his collection. I also met some very nice people from Wembley - and Pat who is a very ardent Bing fan indeed.
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> In fact, it was a wonderful end to a day in London - with the highlight, of course, BING!
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> Yours sincerely,
> Joy Hawkings.

Editor: Dee-lighful....better late than never Joy though I must confess its not usually as lengthy as 20-odd years to get converted! I think the unknown gentleman Joy met must have been DON LOVE; as you will see from TRADING POST, he at least is looking for half-a-dozen 78s for a full collection.

A letter from MR. L. B. HAYES, 19 High Street, LANGLEY, SLOUGH reveals another delightful facet of Bing:

> On Tuesday last I saw Bing and Bob playing golf at Sunningdale and also was happy to meet some ICC members. Bing signed my copy of CALL ME LUCKY - and Bob Hope weighed in with some humourous comments. I found Bing, as I fully expected, very friendly and obliging. In fact, when I asked for his autograph he asked me to follow him into the clubhouse - or, as he put it: "Keep on coming, otherwise I'll get hung up...." He meant, of course, the crowds would hem him in. He also signed an LP sleeve for me. My wife and I enjoyed ourselves enormously. But what of this! The following day my daughter was at London Airport and met Bing and his boys who were about to depart for Scotland. She took the opportunity to mention to Bing about my being a great fan and meeting him the previous day. Bing answered:
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> "Yes, I recall that." He also joked with her about her favourites, the Bay CityRollers and added that its nice to be recognised by younger people like herself....What a capacity Bing has for making a person's day!

And I'll wager Bing DID recall the meeting - and many times he has expressed his surprise at people recognising him. Why, he's even surprised at reasonably mature people recognising him.....leave alone the youngsters. Who do, incidentally!

THE SHOW as seen by - ERIC CROWDER

Can you stand further impressions? I'm sure you can. I know I revelled in them as they poured into the Editorial desk....here's what the Parkinson Show meant to Eric --------

Terrified that I wouldn't get to Shepherds Bush in time, I was saved much of the worry by being invited to stay overnight with relatives at Sunbury-on-Thames - a very convenient place en route to the TV theatre. It was just as well for even getting to Sunbury got me in an awful muddle with the result that I missed a kind invitation from Ken Barnes to visit him at his home. I telephoned him, however, once my wife and I did finally get to Sunbury. He gave me a lot of information about the next day's programme and added that if we got to the TV theatre at about 1.30 he would endeavour to get us in for the afternoon rehearsal. An exciting prospect indeed!

> But disaster still dogged us; despite our comparatively short journey to Shepherds Bush - which we had decided to make by bus - we came under the vagaries of London Transport. The bus we should have caught was unceremoniously cancelled; the one we did catch went a couple of stops - and announced that that was the end of their particular line! I was beginning to think we would have made the journey from Nottingham more quickly! I shan't moan about Nottingham public transport again in a hurry....

However, we got to the TV Theatre around 2pm - and on making enquiries at a side-entrance were brusquely informed that only "Mr. John Fisher" could give permission to enter for the rehearsal. Crestfallen we certainly were, especially as the rain was falling quite heavily.....when who should appear but Pete Moore, whom I'd had the pleasure of meeting previously with Ken Barnes and Leslie Gaylor. This turned things a lot brighter - and especially so when Ken himself arrived and after a short while, we had the necessary permission to enter for the rehearsal - for which our thanks are assuredly due to Ken, Pete Moore and John Fisher. Inside the theatre we met Leslie Gaylor and George O'Reilly, who, you will recall, produced the Irish TV show that Bing did around 1968, and several prominent members of the ICC, including Bob Roberts and his wife Vera, and Fred Reynolds, down from Birmingham.

At 2.30 immense activity broke out on the stage. Pete Moore had assembled the orchestra and they were running thro' various tuning up processes. Then Bing walked on stage! He looked really terrific, very tanned, smiling broadly and obviously very happy; The producer, his assistants, the technicians were all in earnest, workmanlike, conversations and conferences...Parkinson going from one to the other...we could hear the technical requirements and details being ironed out, speedily, efficiently, cameras, mikes, control room, a truly fascinating experience.

Bing was asked to run thro PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY - and he was in superb voice and form... he went on singing....chatting to Parkinson, and it was clear they enjoyed each other's company.....young Harry arrived and was soon strumming his guitar and chatting away to Parkinson, too. What with the songs and the re-takes we had a truly marvellous time. Many times, in the REHEARSAL, there was spontaneous applause from the visitors, the studio technicians and those of us lucky enough to be present - and I noticed that the musicians often led the applause. It was truly amazing - and naturally, a wonderful tribute to Bing's superb talents and style.

> I found myself sitting with Leslie Gaylor and George O'Reilly, who told me of the efforts he was making towards getting Bing interested in doing a TV show to commemorate his 50 years in show business. George explained that he was hoping to link-up the programme between Europe, Ireland and the States so that Crosby fans almost the world over would share the show. Bing fans everywhere would appreciate such an effort. Let's hope George O'Reilly succeeds in producing this great project.

The rehearsal ended after about 2¼ hours - and Bing was still going strong with the

show proper still to come! As Bing left the set, undoubtedly for a rest and some tea in his dressing-room, he gave a friendly wave to those of us who had managed to get in and view the "groundwork".....we saw the No. dressing room later, proudly proclaiming "BING CROSBY" and I felt a thrill of pride that the world's No.1 entertainer was in our own BBC theatre.

There was about an hour to wait before the show "for real" was due to start and we used the time in taking tea in the theatre's self-service bar - and the conversation was lively and excited with everybody so delighted that Bing was indeed in good voice and wonderful form. I feel certain the actual broadcast is being described elsewhere, but I felt the preliminary rehearsal activities would be of interest.....as a postscript, I got Bing to autograph my ticket for the show, and typically he wrote:

To Eric Crowder: Happy you were there.....Bing Crosby.

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UNITED ARTISTS must be favourably impressed with the enthusiastic free promotion their Crosby record is receiving.....you've read how Roy Chappell was featuring the song in his act within 2 weeks....

EDWARD T. HALE, of Islington, forsooth, was actually running round in his van which was plastered with news of the record AND, I understand, had loudspeakers playing the record! Edward, who was at the Parkinson Show with his mother - equally keen - has also organised Round Robin requests to the BBC for the playing of the record.....

Eric Crowder has been on Radio Nottingham about his Bing experiences again....and many members have succeeded in getting the record played on both national and local radio.

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We had just one letter which deplored Bing's appearance on the BBCs TV "TOP OF THE POPS" - "totally out of place in this moronic nonsense...."

Well, Bing's appearance on this programme did force me to watch it up until Bing had sung the song, and normally I would agree with our aggrieved correspondent but Bing treated the whole thing as a delicious piece of whimsy that I could easily accept it. The lovely style in which he gazed around him as he sang, and that final give-away remark:

Go, girls, go! made his appearance just right. In any case, any programme that shows Bing is welcome to me though I must confess, I had to swallow hard when I wrote that last bit!

And by a lovely coincidence, I had delightful company to watch Bing that night - FRANK WILGAUS and his wife were touring Dylan Thomas country (very arty and cultured, you may think) and continued their cultural pursuits by dropping in to Greenmeadow Close to discuss Bing Crosby! Frank is quite an accomplished semi-pro singer himself - and I have a tape to prove it. Hearing that I had missed the Teddy Johnson radio mention of the ICC Frank sent me a dubbing - and on track two did something he has been promising me for some time. He sang a couple of numbers to his own guitar (acoustic) accompaniment. And if you can think of a more melodious couple of numbers than LITTLE MAN YOU'VE HAD A BUSY DAY and THE MASQUERADE IS OVER you have a good ear for melody. These were the two Frank did - and very nicely, too. One of those essentially masculine, yet full-of-melody voices. Also on a visit to South Wales was DON LOVE from Cheshunt - Don was staying in the famous acheological town of Caerleon which is about five or six miles from Cwmbran. We had a most delightful evening, congenial company. Another welcome visitor (I don't really know how I found time to do this issue!) was GEORGE AYLMER and HIS wife from Bury St. Edmunds - that was a night THAT was, finishing about 3.30 am the next day. Added to that, Roy Chappell has found himself "working" in South Wales on a couple of occasions and when he came last we somehow found time to watch ROAD TO MOROCCO before we had to dash to the club at which he was appearing - to sing Bing songs!

LESLIE GAYLOR WRITES

Well, members, this year of 1975 is certainly proving a big year for our Hon. President, and judging by the large amount of mail that is coming to my address everyone is very pleased and excited.

I've been reflecting amidst all this great excitement of how all these great things have come to pass - and it seems to have all stemmed from a letter Bing sent me, dated May 17, 1974.

> In this letter Bing conveyed to me that he had plans to do an album of Southern-type songs. This "gen" I passed on to Teddy Johnson of the BBC during the time he was presenting the Song Stylists Programme. Teddy in turn passed the data on to a man who was writing the scripts for that programme - none other than the man who is proving himself to be the most enterprising record producer in Britain today.
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> Namely, KEN BARNES.

Directly Ken had in mind Bing's proposals to make an album, most members will know he contacted me to put forward his very own proposals - which were that he himself wished to make an album with Bing. I was able to give Ken some help in the initial stages which, happily, he was very glad to accept with both hands. From then on he - nor the Crosby scene - has looked back.

Ken Barnes is a very keen and, without doubt, a very knowledgeable man with as sharp a musical ear as anyone I've ever known. Not only that he has demonstrated he's a man of great drive harnessed to great initiative. One can only bemoan the fact that he wasn't behind Bing years ago.

It makes me almost weep to realise so many years that have been lost and if we had only known of Ken Barnes in those lost years.

> One only has to note that Ken soon got to work immediately Bing showed interest.

He sought, and got, financial backing for it will be realised that he is an independent record producer. He engaged the talents of his long-time friend, Pete Moore to write the arrangements of the numbers to be recorded and also to direct and conduct the orchestra. Ken had to hire the recording studios, engage the musicians to be used in conjunction with Pete Moore and handle a hundred and one other matters relating to the production of modern recordings - and he had to do what must be the main function: "mix" and edit the actual master tapes for the finished product.

> Among the "hundred and one other matters" Ken handled was Bing's television appearance on the BBC's "Grandstand" programme last February and his appearance on "Top of the Pops" in July last not to mention all those radio interviews that have been spread over so many programmes.

Then there was the Bing-Fred Astaire brainwave resulting in the album recorded at the C.T.S. Studios in Wembley on July 14, 15, 16 and 17. Prior to all this, Ken had flown to the States to see Bing and Fred and it was a tremendous thing for him to have pulled off their joint recording venture.

All members of the ICC in particular owe Ken Barnes a real debt of gratitude for

the colossal impetus he has given Crosbyana at this time of the Crosby career, already without parallel; for all he has done to consolidate the Ol' Master right at the top of the Popularity Stakes here. Can anyone doubt Bing's true hold on the affections of the British people, especially after the tremendous events we have recently witnessed?

So, I say "Thanks a Million, Ken, to you and to your good friend Pete Moore for the fine arrangements he worked out and to Alan Warner and Martin Davis of United Artists for their great faith and their support for your ideals."

> I know you have further plans for Bing for the future and, knowing you as I have come to, these are bound to materialise. Good luck!

Now I would like to say something on the great day of July 18 last, the event of Bing's second Parkinson TV Show. What a superb occasion for all those lucky enough to be in attendance. This was a lovely show with plenty of singing from Bing and with him in good form throughout. I'm sure the events of that programme, apart from now having been screened for everyone to have seen, have been more than adequately dealt with by members who were present. Yet here again, Ken and Pete were highly involved and their long hard work went such a long way to ensuring the great success of the show. What wonderful luck to have two such stalwarts to present Bing in such fashion - though, naturally, we must not forget the grand services of TV producer Richard Drewett and his production chief, John Fisher and their team of assistants.

> This was Richard's and John's show like the previous "Parkinson" was, and together with Michael himself, they surpassed the first programme, which was itself tremendously successful. Congratulations to all these grand fellas, too - and they ARE fine chaps when you meet them, as I can testify.

I'm sure this trio will pull off yet a third programme with Bing. That's for sure.

By the time you are reading this the first album will have been released and as I've heard it, it promises to be a real beauty. All members will not need requesting to give this album project every possible support - I know they will BUY it but there is a need for individually publicising it in the way of writing to the BBC (and other radio stations!) to have tracks from it played. By now you will know that the album cover is grand in itself and I understand from Ken Barnes that that revered man of words, ALISTAIR COOK, has written the inside sleeve notes. This must lend any album a new dignity, I feel.

The single from the album, released in advance, THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT, has been getting many radio "plays" and I understand it has been selling very well at the time of writing. Mail to me personally indicates that members have a great liking for the song and this is, naturally, most pleasing.

I have the following information from Ken Barnes relating to the Bing-Fred Astaire album: The first ten listed songs are duets and the album is entitled HOW LUCKY CAN YOU GET? - Sing; In the Cool, Cool, Cool, of the Evening;(this has different lyrics); A Couple of Song and Dance Men; How Lucky Can You Get; Roxie; "Spring, Spring, Spring; Pick Yourself Up; Top Billing; The Entertainer; "I've A Shooting-box in Scotland. There are two solos - "Change Partners" by Bing and "Easy to Remember" by Fred.

The album will be available by Christmas on the Liberty United Artists label. The album is produced, of course, by Ken Barnes, with the arrangements and the orchestra again directed by Pete Moore. The WORLD RECORD set of 7 albums, THE

VERY BEST OF BING is wonderfully presented indeed and despite some inevitable feeling of disappointment by some members that so much has already been reissued, there are quite a number of songs included that are not in the regular re-issue category. I am happy indeed to learn there has already been a heavy demand for this set, and for the cassettes in which form it is also available. Further proof of the continuing popularity of our Mr. C.

> Members may also like to know that the Marketing Manager of WORLD RECORDS, namely MR. AUSTIN BENNETT is also a sculptor of some repute. He has offered to do a bust of Bing for the price of £15 to any member who would be interested in acquiring such a unique feature of Crosbyana, and this price would include postage and packing.
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> Judging by photographs I have seen of a bust of Slim Whitman that Mr. Bennett did for the Whitman Society its certain that a bust of Bing by Mr. Bennett will be a striking likeness of Bing. This surely will appeal to quite a number of our dedicated members. Write to Mr. Bennett, c/o WORLD RECORDS LTD., PO BOX 11, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1QP.

Finally, I wish Reg Bristo all success in his new role as anchor-man of our International Crosby Circle now that the Editorship of this magazine has fallen to his lot as well as the Secretaryship. Without Reg we would almost certainly see our loved and valued Circle crumble. The task of running the club is an exacting and demanding one. All good luck, Reg!

Editor: If, as we all fervently believe, Bing Crosby is a very remarkable man as well as a great artist,, surely as his devoted admirer and voluntary and honorary publicist, Leslie Gaylor, is also a remarkable man, too. There are some incredible fans about, for all kinds of stars and "stars" but Leslie must rank very high on the list for sheer, unrelenting devotion spread over many, many, years to the cause of Crosbyana. And if, as Leslie says, 1975 is "proving a big year" for all of us, there is no doubt at all that for Leslie himself it must have been the climax of all his year's of dedication, the fulfillment of dreams he could never have really expected to have come true. And, be it noted, allowing for the sterling work of Ken Barnes, it all originally stemmed from his ideas and initiative. The Crown Prince of Crosbyana I dubbed Leslie Gaylor many years ago now. It remains vividly accurate today.

> You will note that Leslie rather sadly deplores the years that were wasted....he is, no doubt, referring to what many leading Crosby collectors believe: that after the demise of Jack Kapp Bing's recording activities seemed to have, possibly, lost direction. Jack Kapp really master-minded Bing's recording career for well over 20 years, coercing Bing to sing all kinds of song he, Bing, felt he "hadn't the stature". Like "Silent Night", "O! Come All Ye Faithful" and others...Then again, other collectors believe there was a time in the 50s when, after 20 years or more of regular visits to the recording studios, a degree of boredom, then domestic distress, led to this period when Bing - on his own admission - seemed ready to drop out.

Not difficult to understand, I feel. All those years, all those records....maintaining that fantastic standard. And that was only PART of his career for, it is superfluous to say, he was all the while making films...one after another. Still, Leslie is far from alone in believing that Bing sadly missed Kapp's direction for, again on his own admission, Bing feels he is no expert at picking hit songs.

Still, times have changed, even at this stage....and it is really great.....

BECAUSE IT SEEMED INEVITABLE, FURTHER SPACE WAS RESERVED FOR LESLIE GAYLOR...and sure enough Leslie came thro' again...and he resumes as follows:

I feel that members will be interested to know that I spent an enjoyable time at the home of Ken Barnes on Friday, August 15, listening to one of Ken's latest creations - none other than the Bing-Fred Astaire tracks.

THIS IS A REAL CRACKER OF AN ALBUM WITHOUT A DOUBT, AND THE TWO OLD STALWARTS ARE IN TRULY BRILLIANT FORM. WE KNOW THIS OF OLD, OF COURSE, BUT NOW THEY HAVE DONE IT AGAIN.

Ken has got together some fine material in the way of songs - with amended lyrics - and there is no doubt that Bing and Fred had a real ball in the studio. And, they sound as young as ever! The tracks abound with humour, and on Bing's solo of "Change Partners" he sounds great and this is a track that is certain to delight members.

There is a discordant note to report, I fear. At the Sunningdale golf course recently it was arranged that Bob Hope Hope would be photographed handing Bing a copy of Charles Thompson's new book - "BING" and to this end the book was placed on the back seat of Bob's car.

A LITTLE LATER SOME FELLOW CAME TO BING AND ASKED HIM TO AUTOGRAPH A COPY OF THE BOOK. BING, LOOKING RATHER SURPRISED, ASKED THE MAN WHERE HE HAD GOT THE BOOK? THE MAN REPLIED HE HAD BOUGHT IT IN A SHOP - AND BING WENT AHEAD AND SIGNED IT.

Later when they went to get the copy from Bob Hope's car for the arranged presentation - it was missing. When Bob reported this to Bing he felt fairly certain he had autographed for this stranger the very copy. Naturally, Bing and everyone else was most upset and annoyed at this audacious theft. It was an extraordinary thing to have happened and one wonders just what sort of man would have done such a thing.

However, on a happier note I've had so many letters from people everywhere asking me to pass on to Ken Barnes, Pete Moore and Alan Warner of United Artists their grateful thanks for all they have done on the Crosby front and for the interests of all his fans.

SO, MANY THANKS TO THIS TRIO AND EVERYONE ELSE CONCERNED!

There are some verses to the ballads on the Broadway shows album that I know our members will really lap up. Bing's handling of them, together with Pete Moore's brilliant arrangements - especially featuring the string section - make a tremendous combination. There is no doubt there is some superb Crosby coming our way after the THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT as the initial release. Both the Broadway album and the Astaire albums are terrific; patience must be exercised in the release of these two - but time will show how well worth waiting for they are. To be invited to Ken's home to listen to all three albums was a rare privilege and again I'm indebted to him for his kindness. If I seem all "thanks" to Ken Barnes - well, that's a true reflection of how I feel. And I'm sure its a feeling shared by all members.

You may like to know, too, that the test cuttings (discs) of the 2-LP set Ken is arranging for RCA will feature all the 13 tracks from the original FANCY MEETING YOU album, and the recording quality of BING WITH A BEAT has been adapted to stereo and the overall sound quality has been greatly improved. There will be one track missing, namely MACK THE KNIFE.

FINALLY, BING IS TO DO A "STARS ON SUNDAY" RECORDING FOR ITV. HE WILL SING "THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT" TO ORGAN ACCOMPANIMENT AND "THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S. FURTHERMORE, HE WILL ALSO DO A COUPLE OF BIBLE READINGS.

What more, we can only gasp! These Crosby bonanzas continue to pile up!

Readers will be raising their eyebrows at Leslie's mention of a two-album set from RCA! But news is coming in at such a rate that there hasn't been a chance so far to announce that the two RCA albums - BING WITH A BEAT (with Bob Scobey's Frisco Jazz Band - a highly regarded album) and Bing and Rosemary Clooney in FANCY MEETING YOU HERE (later reissued as RENDEZVOUS) will form the new set and this, too, as you will have gathered, is under the aegis of Ken Barnes!

WE HAVE TO TELL MEMBERS, REGARDING THE DISCOUNT ON THE WORLD RECORD SET, THAT THE REBATE APPLIES ONLY TO CASH SALES, AND NOT TO CREDIT PURCHASES.

THEN LESLIE GAYLOR HAD A LETTER FROM BING.....

Dear Leslie, 25th July, 1975

Thank for your letter. So glad you liked the Michael Parkinson show. It was fun to do. He is such a generous host. I thought the music sounded pretty good. The band was first class and everybody I talked to who happened to be there said they enjoyed it a great deal.

I just want you to know Leslie that I am always very grateful for the many things you have done for me through the past years, and I'm sure it has been most helpful in keeping my name alive here in the British Isles, and very valuable indeed.

I hope that when the albums come out that they please you and we are able to get some interest aroused.

All best regards,

(signed) BING.

Can you imagine a letter like that? From the greatest superstar of them all? Well, once again I'm being rhetorical for you don't have to imagine it for Leslie received it. I'm sure my very good friend Beryl Overbury of the Sinatra Music Society - and her colleagues - will look at it with wistful eyes, for Beryl recently wrote to me:

"I was very pleased for you Reg when I read about your meeting with Bing. If only Frank was as reachable. I did try myself to arrange for the committee of the SMS to make a presentation to Frank while he was in London. Well, I never got past his secretary with the present and the bouquet.....at least Bing does acknowledge the work you do and this must be very, very encouraging....."

It certainly is - yet Bing extends this warmth to practically everybody - and it is, of course, one of the many facets that make Bing the remarkable man he is. However, on a happier note, Beryl also wrote that she was in the club all those years ago when Bing first came to Britain (see last issue of BING):

Enjoyed the last issue of BING very much indeed; in fact, this issue brought back such happy memories for me of the year 1944. During the War I served in the WAAF at the Air Ministry, Whitehall and I was one of the very lucky ones to be present at the Queensbury Club for Bing's broadcast. I never hear "Long Ago and Far away", or "Moonlight Becomes you" without living that great time all over again....."

Beryl "got herself in the papers" - including a jolly picture - on account of a story about her "pinching" Frankie's tea cup...she tells me she didn't - not really!

IF FURTHER PROOF WAS NEEDED OF THE GREAT ESTEEM IN WHICH LESLIE GAYLOR IS HELD, the following letter would surely supply it:

Dear Leslie,

BBC. TV CENTRE,
WOOD LANE, LONDON,
W12 7RJ

Well - it happened again!

I still can't believe that I've been lucky enough to produce two programmes with Bing Crosby - and all because of that first contact you made with us way back in 1972 and all the splendid follow-up work you've done since.

As you know, I've been away from the BBC for some time and have only recently returned to produce this series of Michael Parkinson Programmes - I can't think of a more exciting or prestigious show to come back to.

The show will be transmitted on August 30th as the first in our new series, and I'll be interested to hear the reaction of Bing's fans.

Leslie - I can't thank you enough for all your help, enthusiasm and encouragement.

Please keep in touch.

Kindest regards,
Yours sincerely,
RICHARD DREWETT.

That, too, must go into Leslie's archives as a prized possession

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THE ROAD TO - OCHERTYRE !

It's in Scotland! Better make that clear right away! It was another story that made big headlines in Bonnie Scotland and got prominent mention in the National newspapers, in London and, of course, elsewhere. Much was made of Bing's acceptance to be a patron of a tiny 100-seat theatre - obviously an "arty" venture - which has been taken over by a non-profit-making company of charitable status. Seems the founder of the theatre, Sir William Murray, met Bing some years ago at Gleneagles, though not then on theatrical business. THE STRATHEARN HERALD (supplied by Keith Parkinson) reported:

"Mr. Barry Swann, director of Development of the theatre, said that a letter had been sent from Crieff to Gleneagles Hotel, where the film star was staying inviting him to become a patron and enclosing details of the theatre.... In his reply, Mr. Crosby wrote:

I looked over your brochure describing the recent activities of your theatrical group. You seem to have done some worthwhile things. I have never been really associated with the legitimate theatre, just vaudeville, radio, TV, etc.

My wife has been fairly active in this field for the last ten or 12 years and she might be useful to you.

However, if you seek my permission to include me as honorary patron, you may feel free to do so.

Cordially, BING CROSBY."

Bing's gracious acceptance of patronage of the theatre was hailed with great delight by the company. I'm not addicted to the game of golf - I say game though. I get the impression it is a disease more than a game - but a slightly cynical friend of mine said he thought Bing was solving in grand fashion the problem that besets all keen golfers: how to keep the wife happy while you are, in varying ways, hitting that little ball round the eighteen little holes, knowing the true joy awaits one at the 19th hole...

More important to us, it does seem to indicate that Bing's visits to the golf-courses of Scotland are likely to become regular events, even if only annually.

William Hickey of THE DAILY EXPRESS seized on the story, and headlined it: A HIGHLAND FLING FOR KATHY CROSBY, and went on to say:

"A British stage debut is astonishingly being planned by Kathryn Crosby, wife of the Old Groaner, at a tiny theatre run by baronet Sir William Murray. Kathryn, 41, is a frequent visitor with Bing on his golfing trips to Gleneagles, in Scotland.....Sir William tells me: 'Bing suggested the idea himself....I've met him several times at Gleneagles. He comes up most years...I'm extremely fond of the chap. I asked him to be a patron of the theatre. He agreed and then said his wife had experience in repertory and theatre in the US and perhaps she could do something to help us. I'm delighted! It'll be a tremendous coup for us.'

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WHAT ABOUT THAT BIT WHERE BING WROTE: "I HAVE NEVER BEEN REALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE LEGITIMATE THEATRE...just vaudeville, radio, TV, etc..."

I suppose the "etc" meant a record or two!

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AN INTERESTING LETTER FROM THE STATES - FRANK SYLVESTER, 7917 Pingrove Avenue, Parma, Ohio, USA:

I wish to inform you that many of the Crosby HOLLYWOOD SERIES records and others can be obtained by writing to:

GLEN RAE INCORPORATED
1910 Lockbourne Rd.
Columbus, Ohio, 43207, USA.

I have no connection with Glen Rae, but AM interested in Crosby collectors getting their wants! On p.15 of the June issue, No. 38, it says "Consider yourself lucky if you discover THOROUGHLY MODERN BING. I've contacted Pickwick International and they have several of these albums on hand. If you advise me how many copies you can get orders for I'll either send them to you in one package (cheaper) or I'll get Glen Rae Inc. to deal with orders direct. Off hand, I would think the prices would be around 5.50 dollars to cover album, P & P and insurance. (5.50 dollars = approx. £2.50). I also think that HEY JUDE is available. Your discography shows it released by HAU - this album was put out by AMOS RECORDS, of AMOS PRODUCTION INC., 6565 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, California. Why doesn't the discography also list the American company? If substantial orders arise I will contact them for you. In would love to have BELOVED HYMNS if you know of a source that is reasonable.

In the last issue of BING, we mentioned records by other artists that involved mention of Bing in the lyric and among them we included Schnozzle Durante's I'M THE GUY WHO FOUND THE LOST CHORD! Actually, it was that other Durante immortal, INKA DINKA DOO wherein the Schnoz. sings "....that note was given to me by Bing Crosby... and was he glad to get rid of it! Personally, I love that one in Club Durant when, while Jimmy's mate is singing, he says: Hear that, Crosby! Get packing...

Editor: I'm afraid I cannot undertake the purchase of records; already overloaded. If anyone CAN, however, I will undertake to channel orders to the person volunteering. And if anyone can help Frank with BELOVED HYMNS perhaps you can work out an exchange. Frank also sent a US newspaper clipping which says that Bing, Bob and Dorthy are indeed going to make a final ROAD film! It will be called THE ROAD TO TOMORROW...the cutting was dated August 14, 1975....they will play widowed grandfathers - Bing and Bob, that is.....

ON THE PAGE OPPOSITE

it was our intention to give a rough idea of the many items appearing in the press recently. Unfortunately, it has turned out much rougher than we anticipated! Our apologies, but newspaper print and photographs are notoriously difficult to reproduce. So, a word or two about the items: There is the letter headed SIR BING and written by our diligent and enthusiastic member, FRED TILT of Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. Fred certainly acted on the suggestion thrown out in the last issue about the inclusion of Bing in a British Honours List and his letter is an excellently written and telling contribution.

> And that's not all from the Tilt family! Since the page opposite was printed a letter from Fred reads:
>
> "The enclosed cutting from the Daily Express" is by my mother, who is the same age as Bing and who is at present recovering from a major operation. She did not tell me she was writing so it was a surprise to me to see her in print....."

And a most delight surprise for Fred and all readers, for Mrs. Tilt's letter, accompanied by a small cartoon showing a lady standing behind her husband's chair (he is reading the paper) holding a record in her arms, reads:

> "How pleased I am to see the Old Groaner in the news. He has made a marvellous come-back after his illness. No one can compete with him. He has done such good work in this country, as well as in America, that I really think he deserves to be knighted.
>
> Carry on the good work, Bing.
>
> Mrs. W. Tilt. Bromsgrove."

A lovely effort and in the circumstances we must make Mrs. Tilt an honoary member!

Then there is the cutting sent in by Cyril Parker of Wolverhampton in which the writer avers that "some of the newer fellers were given a lesson in putting over a song during Top of the Pops...it came from the Old Groaner, Bing Crosby...."

Not content with his SIR BING LETTER, Fred Tilt got involved in an argument, as you can read, over the respective merits of u-know-who and Bing....

The letter headed BING THE LEGEND, is difficult to read so here it is again:

> "Would it not be a fine gesture if some honour was bestowed in Britain upon a man who is already a legend - a world citizen, and one of the finest entertainers the world has ever known - Bing Crosby?
>
> E. Smith,
> Broomlands Drive, Dumfries."

This interesting writer is NOT an ICC member, though we are endeavouring to contact the Mr. Smith. Its quite a coincidence that he has hit on our idea of Bing figuring in the Honours List.

"The Crosby Touch" paragraph refers to Bing's typical action of going to the assistance of a man, crippled by polio for almost 50 years, having difficulty in getting into his car...Bing was signing autographs at Lockerbie at the time he spotted the man.

"Bing, inevitably trapped by dozens of autograph-hunters, just sat down calmly on the clubhouse steps, put his pipe in his mouth, and started signing....."

(cont. over...

BING WENT THE STRING OF OUR HEARTS

A Great Guy Entertains

LAST NIGHT

Some of the newer fellers were given a lesson in putting over a song during Top of the Pops (BBC-1). It came from the old groaner, Bing Crosby, and though his artistry was obviously lost on many of the kids in the studio audience it must have provided a rare treat for older viewers. It seemed incredible to believe that only a year ago Bing was seriously ill in hospital. His face reflects the years he's been around, but his effortless style and easy crooning are as good as ever.

GARY COPELAND

SIR BING . . .

I FEEL most people will agree that Bing Crosby's 50 years in show business and truly incomparable career have given much international pleasure.

He is revered in Britain perhaps more than anywhere else. Should he not be rated British and appear in Her Majesty's Honours List?

A rare and fitting accolade, such as was bestowed on Sir Douglas Fairbanks, is, to my mind, a tribute very well deserved by the "Old Groaner."

Fred Tilt.

Bromsgrove.

Bing is still king

THE OPEN letter to Frank Sinatra by Peter Deeley was amusing and interesting.

However, the little flattery of: "You're still better than anyone around" overlooked the fact that the greatest of all was in London recording studios last February.

Yes, at over 70 years of age, Bing Crosby is still singing like a Paul Whiteman Rhythm boy. He started while Frank was still cutting his tonsils and after 50 years of it can still throw off a song better than anyone else around.

So watch out for the new LP's, Peter Deeley, and grab yourself an earful of the "Old Groaner" to chase away the Sinatra Blues.

Fred Tilt,
(International Crosby Circle)
Bromsgrove.

THE CROSBY TOUCH

BING CROSBY, in Lockwood one lunchtime during his golfing trip to Britain, was signing autographs when he spotted Brian Jarvis.

Brian has been crippled by polio for almost 50 years, and walks on crutches. He was having difficulty getting into his car because of the crowds. Bing hurried over, held the car door, and helped him in.

Another of those nice touches that make the Old Groaner so well loved.

"I thought at the time that I must have been holding the band up on the course and he was trying to tell me he wanted to play through!

"Bob Hope tells me that the only man who would have been safe out there is Bing Crosby, because he's still playing with bullets' smells.

"I'll tell you one thing—that lightning has made a big difference in my attitude to life.

"I'm taking my wife out more often and I've taken the kids to a Western playground and they all thought it was great. They probably hope I'll get struck again!"

Bing the legend

WOULD IT be more a fitting gesture if some honour was bestowed on Britain upon a man who is ahead a legend—a world citizen, and one of the finest entertainers the world has ever known—Bing Crosby?

E. Smith.

Broomlands Drive,
Dumfries.

BEFORE the last war film stars had smooth, gently rounded faces. The women often had not merely rounded but round faces—Clara Bow faces, Claudette Colbert faces. As the cinema talking more and more, extended the muscles the men went in for more length—Robert Taylor faces, Bing Crosby faces but they were still smooth and had appropriate noses. It was some time before we reached the Steve McQueen bullet-head or the Anthony Quinn hippo-mug.

● *THURSDAY*

Celebrities Plagued By Autograph Hunters

AMONG the crowds spotted Old Groaner, Bing Crosby himself, TV comedian Bruce Forsyth, and singer Kenny Lynch.

Bruce and Kenny flying around trying to see some golf and avoid autograph hunters. Bing, inevitably trapped by dozens of them, just sat down calmly on the clubhouse steps, put his pipe in his mouth, and started signing.

When I managed to have a word, he said with a quiet smile, "These kids, their fathers and mothers, have given me a good living for more years than I care to remember—so what's 15 minutes?"

BING CROSBY lives in a rambling, 40-roomed mansion in Hillsborough, San Francisco—a suburb so exclusive and private that most of its homes are hidden behind tropical-type foliage and trees.

A formidable electronically operated gate separates "Old Groaner" from the rest of the world, and only after announcing myself through a megaphone perched above the gate, was I allowed on to the estate.

At the front door I was met by Mr. Crosby's butler, Alan Fisher, an Englishman from Manchester who once spent six years "in domestic service" with the Windsors.

Fisher formally introduced me to Mr. Crosby, who, in turn, gave me an informal slap on the back and led me into his study.

"So you're from old Blighty, huh?" he said casually. "Good rolling country. Not as good as Scotland, but not bad. I'll be coming your way sometime this summer. Try and get my handicap down."

"I play to eight these days, though there was a time I was down to two." He shrugged his shoulders. "But I'm not as young as

by CLIVE HIRSCHHORN

If he had it to live over again would he make many changes?

"Not many," he said. "I think I'd be more generous to people who came to me for help and whom I was often too busy or too self-absorbed to think about. I regret that now.

"Self-ishness. It's so easy to be selfish when you're young and riding high. In my private life I was fortunate though. I made many mistakes in my first marriage and didn't spend nearly enough time with my four boys. Two

"Old Groaner" Crosby

Many readers have commented on Bing having a pipe in his mouth. Does he smoke it, however - or merely employs an empty pipe for old times' sake and comfort? It was reported on his recovery from the operation that he had forsworn smoking for ever more..

Another paragraph on the cuttings page which you probably cannot decipher alas refers to the crack Trevino was reported to have made after he had been struck by lightning in America: "Bob Hope tells me that the only man who would have been safe out there is Bing Crosby because he's still playing with hickory staffs...." An elementary, home-made golf club as opposed to the modern steel (and lightning-conducting) clubs Trevino and most other people use!

Yet another reference says "Before the last war film stars had smooth, gently rounded faces....Robert Taylor faces, Bing Crosby faces....." Very true, though the occasional homely face - such as Edw. G. Robinson, Paul Muni, and a few others - made a big impact. Another big difference to today's scene where the anti-hero is projected - characters minus good looks, principals, ethics and morals!

However, to the second "page opposite".....where we've made a gallant if unavailing effort to reproduce newspaper pictures. And the one which probably everyone has already seen is a delightful picture of Bing with our own Sweetheart of the Forces, recently honoured herself, Vera Lynn. Seems we are going to see Bing again on the "telly" as he was "recruited", it was reported, for one of Vera's TV spectaculars.

> One cannot help feeling, with no disrespect whatever to Dame Vera, how nice, how fitting, it would have been if Anne Shelton had been brought into the picture during Bing's long and popular visit. Anne's sensational appearance, at short notice, with Bing in 1944 when they sang that incredible "Easter Parade" duet has given Anne a lasting place in Crosby history - the first singer of either male or female to duet with Bing in this country. Anne is still around, making the occasional album and the very occasional TV/radio appearance, BUT still singing in great style. Regarding Anne's duet with Bing, I well recall how appropriate this seemed for I had already formed the impression that Anne Shelton was as near as one could get to a female Crosby! A startling statement, no doubt but her phrasing, feeling, and intonation were definitely Crosby-orientated. Anne started singing when she was about 14! I'm sure Bing would have re-met her with the warmest feelings. Would I be right, I wonder, in saying that the only other British singer to duet with Bing, apart from Anne, was Marion Ryan? This was during the 1961 visit.

The other picture is one of very many that appeared, particularly in the Scottish press.

As this is being written, the papers carry the story that Bing and his family flew from London to Paris, August 14 - and got involved in a minor bomb scare! Seems an Arab passenger was carrying two imitation guns!

But easily the best newspaper photograph of Bing - and I hope everyone saw it - was the picture of him making the young lady golfer laugh! And there was nothing phoney about it either, the young woman was really "in stitches" as they say, at what Bing had said - and Bing himself looked highly amused. We really must try and get a good reproduction of this picture in the next issue. The caption said it must have been a "golden oldie"! A picture of unrestrained, spontaneous humour is always a delight - and this took the prize, in your Editor's opinion.

There was also a fine picture of Bing and Fred Astaire taken during their recording session for Ken Barnes in the big-circulation Daily Mirror; it prompted a letter a few days later from our former secretary, Frank Murphy up there in Wallsend, which also appeared in the Daily Mirror remarking how great it was to see these two wonderful veteran entertainers together again - and making a new album. It was indeed.....

The Old Groaner Can Still Wow The Fans . . .

● It was "The Road to Turnberry" for hundreds of Bing Crosby fans yesterday.
● They flocked to the Ayrshire course to see their evergreen hero playing in the ProCelam golf tournament. Nattily dressed in scarlet slacks and pullover over a blue tee-shirt, topped off with a bright yellow hat, Bing didn't disappoint them.
● As he strolled around the course, he made frequent stops to sign autographs. He'd a special word for children and old folk.
● A lady fan asked him about his old screen pal, Bob Hope.
● "Uncle Bob? He decided not to come over when he discovered he'd have to pay his own air fare," cracked Crosby.
● Bing had a long chat with the pretty young lady in our picture. She told him she came from Edinburgh. Her name was Lesley.
● He replied that his professional partner, Bernard Gallacher, also hailed from the capital.
● "I know," said Lesley. "He's my husband!"
● The golf purists were also pretty pleased with Bing's performance.
● He played some fine shots although the ball sometimes broke unluckily for him.
● The Old Groaner was pipped by his son, Harry, who shared first place with his professional partner, Tommy Horton.

Bing Crosby visited the Open yesterday. The "Old Groaner" pulled a wry face over a misunderstanding about stand seats at the last green — but the problem was soon cleared up.

Bing's special dame

DAME Vera Lynn, the Forces' Sweetheart who sang Britain through the war, is back in the front line. She is recording a TV spectacular in London.

And she's recruited some spectacular reinforcements for the show — such as Old Groaner himself, Bing Crosby.

But then Dame Vera is someone special. As Bing said yesterday while she perched on his lap during a break in rehearsals: "There is nothing like a dame. . . ."

Picture: KENT GAVIN

BING PICTURES

Many readers have a penchant for photographs of Bing - for albums, decorating their "dens" or perhaps just because they like 'em.....

FRANK MURPHY, former Secretary of the ICC, has now built up a wide-ranging gallery of Crosbyana pictures. They are postcard size and are 20p each with a minimum order of five. Overseas members should remit country's equivalent of the pound sterling. The address of Frank Murphy (to whom you should apply direct) is:

32 Ferndale Avenue, WALLSEND, TYNE AND WEAR, NE28 7NE England.

Photographs should be ordered by NUMBER, and they are as follows:

1. Bing and Harry - aged two.
2. Bing and Mary Martin "Birth of the Blues".
3. Bing and Leslie Phythian - Cockermouth 1966.
4. Bing and The Little Dublin Singers 1966.
5. Bing, Kathryn and Harry, 1961.
6. Bing and Broadway Bill, Riding High.
7. Bing at the CBS mike 1931.
8. Bing, Dixie, and Gary, 1933.
9. Bing and Bob Hope "Variety Girl".
10. Bing in Russian Adventure, 1966.
11. Bing, Kathryn & Frank Murphy, Cockermouth 1966.
12. Bing and Gary, outdoor Benefit, 1950s.
13. Bing solo at mike, same benefit.
14. Bing and Kathryn at wine store, late 50s.
15. Bing and Kathryn with shark-fishing trophies.
16. Bing with Sinatra & Dino (Martin) -Robin and 7 Hoods.
17. Doctor Rhythm, 1938.
18. Bing and Joan Collins, Hope, British Lion Pub. '61.
19. Bing with Louis Campbell, The Starmaker.
20. Bing and Kathryn in evening dress, 1957.
21. Bing with Martha Raye, Double or Nothing;
22. Bing in "Say One for Me".
23. Bing and Bob Hope "Teamwork".
24. Bing and four sons on set of "Ichabod".
25. Bing and Dixie, early 30s.
26. Honest Harry Crosby, St. Leger, 1965.
27. Bing at the Calgary Parade, late 50s.
28. Bing holding Dolly Varden trout.
29. Bing, Kathryn, Harry, and Mary Frances 1965.
30. Bing with Betty Hutton "Here Come the Waves".
31. Bing, Kathryn, Harry, Las Cruces, early 60s.
32. Bing golfing at St. Andrews, 1952.
33. Bing with Barry Fitzgerald "Welcome Stranger".
34. Bing, Dixie and four sons, 1952.
35. Bing, Rosie Clooney, Louis Armstrong, Hi-Lo's.
36. Bing and Frances Langford, early 40s.
37. Bing and radio producer, Bill Morrow 40s.
38. Bing and Eddie Lang, 1932.
39. Bing and son Lindsay fishing, early 50s.
40. Bing, Bill Bendix, Sir Cedric Hardwicke "A Connecticut Yankee".
41. Bing singing "Little One" from HIGH SOCIETY.
42. Bing in "The Emperor Waltz".
43. Bing, Donald O'Connor, Fred McMurray "Sing you Sinners".
44. Bing and the Clan (sic) in "Robin & the 7 Hoods".
45. Bing and Michael Holliday: Pose 1.
46. " " " " Pose 2.
47. " " " " Pose 3.
48. Bing and Margie Holliday.
49. Bing with Dermot O'Brien and Milo O'Shea, 1966.
50. Bing and Leslie Gaylor, Shepperton.
51. Bing, Alma and Frank Murphy, John Maugham, Derek Parkes: Bible Presentation, Shepperton Studios 1961.
52. Bing and Perry Como: Pose 1.
53. " " " " Pose 2.
54. " " " " Pose 3.

An imposing gallery indeed, and an excellent opportunity for those inclined.

KEEPING TRACK

BY BERT BISHOP

A REVIEW OF CURRENT RELEASES FEATURING BING - AND FIRST AND FOREMOST THE BONANZA FROM WORLD RECORDS !

But no, not quite - we must deal with THAT single first.....

It is indeed a happy and most remarkable coincidence that in this 25th Anniversary Year of our Circle that we in Britain are enjoying such a wonderful Bing bonanza by his most welcome presence. Luckily, we can share much of our pleasure through the medium of the many recordings, old and new, and currently on release, with our members and friends on other shores. I feel privileged to be among those in a position to pass on the good news through the columns of our magazine.

I did not number among the few lucky members who were present at Bing's recording sessions at Chappell's in Bond Street last February; but those who did, and with whom I have had contact or correspondence, expressed great joy at the sound of Bing in 1975. I felt that some of their delight might have been occasioned by the euphoric effect of being present at such an event, which was certainly a rare opportunity for UK admirers of the "old Groaner" - an affectionate title which has been extensively brought to our attention via the news media of late. I have to confess, then, to a degree of suppression of anticipatory excitement over the new recordings in case it was to remain totally unfulfilled. However, any such fears of disappointment were fully without foundation and completely shattered the old adage - "anticipation is the greater part of pleasure". This revelation became immediately apparent on the first hearing of the "single" of THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT as released on Friday 27 June 1975 on United Artists UP 35852.

This is, of course, a stereo recording of a song written and composed by Peter Dacre and Les Reed in close collaboration with Ken Barnes and Bing himself; and as everyone will surely realise is Bing's own philosophical look back on his life in song. One would imagine it to be an impossibility to condense Bing's "life" into one song, and yet its apparent simplicity so aptly conveys to us the Bing that we have come to know and admire. I cannot count the number of non-members who have said to me 'that song really is Bing, isn't it?' or words to that effect. Although Bing has sung a number of variants of the lyric, the one that is to be heard on this recording has the greatest appeal, I think, and the second and last verses are, basically, Bing's lines. However, the substance of the song as regards the lyric and title are from the pens of Peter Dacre and Ken Barnes; and how apposite they are!

Les Reed's music is an easy-going melody that makes the tune eminently "singable"; something to whistle at work; sing in the bath, and la-la along with at any opportunity. A new song composed in such a way that it encourages the seemingly outdated fashion of singing to oneself for the pure pleasure of it - and yet it is a song that will, hereon, forever be instantly identified with Bing.

The Pete Moore orchestra accompanies Bing and is as lush a sound that Bing has had as a backing since his sessions with Mishel Piastro back in the late 60s. The arrangement could hardly be bettered and much credit is due to Pete and Ken Barnes for the orchestration and balance. Hardly any strain, if at all, is apparent from Bing. He has been given full rein and at no time does he hide behind the brass on the fortissimo. His voice flows along loud and clear and with that pure Crosby tone which is known the world over; and it was, and is, a unique foretaste of Bing as he performs on the remarkable collection of tracks that have been recorded by him in this, his fiftieth anniversary year of recording.

Side "B" of the "single" is a jaunty number interpolating ROAMIN' IN THE GLOAMIN' within the main title of THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY - a duet with Johnny Mercer set to the same orchestra - and what a feat of arranging THAT must have been! For this track had

been pre-recorded (in America), and when Mr. Crosby and Mr. Mercer get together the action really picks up and anything, but anything! goes! This song is no exception and is a truly jolly spoof of such a British nature that it must have been quite definitely aimed at the UK market with the references to national characters living and long since gone. It is noticeable that Bing is rather prone to betray his Irish heritage when he adopts regional British accents - note his "cockney" chimney sweep in CHIM, CHIM, CHEREE - and once again his maternal origin evidences itself in this lively duet. Johnny may not be the best of singers but when he sings with Bing it just doesn't seem to notice. In any event what he lacks vocally is more than compensated for by his outstanding lyric writing. He has been responsible for so many great "standards".

The other obvious credit on the cream-coloured label is that of Producer Ken Barnes who, on Leslie Gaylor's instigation, has been the prime mover in this year of Bing - to the delight of us all.

AND NOW TO THE BONANZA: "THE VERY BEST OF BING"
WORLD RECORDS.

Readers will already be acquainted with the titles of the songs that have been released on the WORLD RECORDS collection for they were published on page 49 of the last issue of BING - No. 38 of June 1975. A review of each record follows but it might be helpful if you have that listing handy for reference. Basically a six-LP collection, there is the happy bonus now usual with such collections, a free LP which is a reasonably legitimate sales promotion practice; so we haveTHE VERY BEST OF BING SM291 - SM296 incl. plus SMF297. It is a boxed collection of 113 tracks of pure Crosby ranging from 1934 to 1955 which sells at £11.75, or at £12 over three months. Cassettes are also avai able at £12.95 and £13.20 under the same respective conditions.

> IMPORTANT CONCESSION TO ICC MEMBERS: By using the enclosed order form ICC members will be able to obtain this set £1 cheaper than the prices stated. It is regretted that this will be too late for some of the more zealous collectors. It is understood there may be a slight delay in the issue of the cassette version for reasons beyond the control of WORLD RECORDS. This offer - the £1 discount - is a much-appreciated gesture to the ICC by WORLD RECORDS.

The collection comes in a stout cardboard box of white tapestry and fissured marble effect, front and rear, and has the title boldly scripted in blue alongside the broadly smiling features of Bing from a painting copied from a popular photograph of him that has been featured on early 10" LPs and not a few song sheets. Inside the top half of the hinged box the six LPs are clearly tabulated with each album's individual title; and with a tilted straw boater atop the columns and a facsimile of Bing's full signature signing them off,the stage is set for the truly handsome scenes and sounds which follow.

For the perfectionists in our midst it must be said that some eight errors have occurred in the data of the collection and it is perhaps ironic that Bing's two most famous songs are incorrectly dated. These will be dealt with in further detail as they arise:

1. BING'S HIT PARADE: - "WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT" SM291

Each of the six sleeves has a frontispiece photograph of a particular locale which matches the mood and title of the record contained within. This first one shows a tropic shore silhouetted against a deepening blue sky reflected in cool, lapping, waters. An idyllic setting. Inevitably, Bing's theme song commences the programme, but it is not the lush strains of the Paradise Island Trio that should be heard leading into the vocal that the 1940 dating indicates! As will quickly be realised, this is the 1945 version with John Scott Trotter. By now you will have the LP on the turntable, of course, and have noted a very comprehensive label, crediting everything except accompaniment - and also repeating the picturewhich appears on the main box. Thus, we have a new host of "picture labels". Bing has had so many hits that the compilation of this first record must have caused nightmares of rejection rather than selection. In the event, 17 tracks are featured (all the other LPs have 16) and only two of them are "Gold Records" out of Bing's

officially accredited 22-million or multi-million sellers. (See BING No. 34, page 8). Many moods and styles set the pace for the entire collection, and for those marking up their collections it has been noted that the two alternative "take" titles on here, SHOE SHINE BOY and BE HONEST WITH ME, are both take-A.

> Running thro' this collection are copious sleeve notes by our current Bing-benefactor, Ken Barnes. Occupying half the rear sleeve on each LP they comprise a potted biography of Bing coupled with accurately informative notes on many of the tracks; quotes from Bing's autobiography, CALL ME LUCKY; and from Henry Pleasants' THE GREAT AMERICAN POPULAR SINGERS - all written and hung together in Ken Barnes' highly readable style.

What with the rear sleeve inset photographs of Bing, his family, friends, and associates, the presentation of this collection takes on an immensely satisfying and professional appearl which - it goes without saying - makes it a "must" for any collector worth his - or her! - salt.

2. BING'S TRAVELS: - "IN A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN" SM292

Sunlit tiled rooftops lead the eye to grandiose churches, tilled fields and distant mountains, and from the first track, GOING MY WAY, we know that we are on our way to "Where Bing Crosby is concerned, language barriers just don't exist", as Ken Barnes aptly observes on the reverse. Well, just look at the title list and see for yourself! Noting along the way here that I'LL SEE YOU IN C-U-B-A dates from 1946 and not 1952, and the alternate "take" - BLUE HAWAII, take-A. How pleasant to have MARCHETA on here! A lovely track which has not previously been featured on an LP. Others here are also rarities on micro-groove and will fill gaps in many a collection.

3. BING'S GREAT FILM SONGS: - "SING A SONG OF SUNBEAMS" SM293

Surely an English country lane, with a midsummer sun dappling verdant leaves with a golden yellow, and backlighting a pretty girl carrying a picnic basket. Not a scene from a Bing film - none are - but it beautifully illustrates the sub-title which in every case are song titles featured on the LPs to which they relate. Bing's first Gold Record ("officially" that is) plus his tenth, SWINGING ON A STAR, make up a trio of Academy Award-winning film songs with IN THE COOL, COOL, COOL, OF THE EVENING, a classic combination of Hoagy Carmichael and Johnny Mercer. No errors on this sleeve but the relevant "takes" are: "SWEET LEILANI - B; MOONBURN - A; I'VE GOT A POCKETFUL OF DREAMS DLA 1312-A; LOVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER - A. There is an uncaptioned photograph of Bing in a yachting cap - may be a'still' from ROAD TO SINGAPORE? Can anyone confirm please? As Editor Reg remarked in the previous issue "there is a fair slice of Bing's film songs to help those who are pining for a reissue of BING'S HOLLYWOOD 1-15", and 16 beautiful recordings have been creamed off of the 183 on that unique collection for this LP alone.

4. BING'S EVERGREENS: -"DOWN BY THE OLD MILLSTREAM" SM294

Some in the UK MUST recognise this truly English setting! Swans drifting by red-brick relics of a bygone age with a cathedral tower - a majestic edifice - beyond the clay-tile rooftops showing the time as 5.15 on a balmy summer's afternoon. I think that this may be my favourite LP of the entire collection. Not just for the sleeve, you understand, but for the remarkable collection of Bing songs that it features. Not so many have been featured all that frequently on micro-groove before, and I believe that the versions of IDA, SWEET AS APPLE CIDER, and JUST A-WEARYING FOR YOU are first-timers on record other than 78s. Incidentally, that first title should read - on the sleeve - 1939 and not 1952. "Take" numbers are: MARY'S A GRAND OLD NAME -A; LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART -A; DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM -A; IN MY MERRY OLDSMOBILE -B; JUST A-WEARY-ING FOR YOU- A. A glance over these titles, plus SWEETHEARTS, LILY OF LAGUNA, and BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON selected from the sixteen will tempt me to set this LP spinning at the slightest opportunity!

5. BING SINGS BERLIN: - "WHITE CHRISTMAS" SM295

White Christmas indeed! The sight of this cold sleeve is most refreshing in the midst of the heatwave during which this review is being written. Crisp, virgin snow and sparkling crystals of ice on sylvan evergreens instantly recall the closing scenes of the film of that title. But the titles on here are mainly from HOLIDAY INN and BLUE SKIES, with a couple of sentimental ballads and a track with 'Jolie' thrown in for good measure. Irving Berlin created so many great hits but I think it can be safely said that his greatest would never have achieved such unassailable fame had it not been for Bing's introduction and recording of WHITE CHRISTMAS. Here we have the second of the two classic errors in this collection - it is the 1947 version and not the 1942 original which is featured here. Agreed, the accompaniment and arrangement are almost identical, but Bing as we well know seldom warbles the same words in the same way twice, and the difference is obvious and immediately apparent. As yet, the '42 version has not been reissued on micro-groove. LAZY is Take-A; all the other tracks being one take releases. Ken Barnes takes a longish look at the amazing talents of Irving Berlin, and particularly his association with Bing as exemplified on this LP; he concludes with the observation that together they have been "the most commercially successful combination of talents since the invention of recorded sound".

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6. BING TAKES TO THE ROAD: - THE ROAD TO MOROCCO SM296

Mosaic-fronted gateway - mosque-like and battlemented - yashmaks, sandals and gaudy market wares attract the eye to trace any sign of our globe-trotting heroes in the persons of Bing, Bob and 'Dottie' (she would accept the affectionate diminutive!) No sign of them on the front, of course, but stills from RIO, SINGAPORE and UTOPIA on the rear sleeve suitably conjure up madcap moments, fast-flying wisecracks, ditties duetted with "Ski-Nose", the omnipresent pat-a-cake routine and all those beautiful ballads crooned to the luscious Lamour. What a feast of filmic footage! Most Crosby buffs will know the dialogue to those films better than Bing and Bob ever did. and you have only to put this LP on the turntable to bring it all back! No songs from HONG KONG but the six originals are well represented. Just remember to note that BUT BEAUTIFUL and YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW THE LANGUAGE were recorded in 1947 and not 1946 as stated, and that SWEET POTATO PIPER and WOULD YOU are both Take-B - and you have the facts as well as the fascination.

BING AND FRIENDS: SMF 297

This LP, being a bonus as already noted, is not listed as being Record 7, nor does it have a sub-title. The album number, you will see, includes the letter "F" and I would hazard a guess that this is a code for "Free". The sleeve is notably different, too, in that it departs from the scenic style of the main collection by featuring fourteen identifiable accompanists in music and song. No photographs on the rear of the sleeve; but it opens out into a centre double spread, in the way of double-album packs, of seven stills from Bing's films and a photograph of Bing recording with Johnny Mercer. The photos are basically black and white but a very colourful effect has been achieved by overprinting backgrounds and some artistes in varying tones of brick-red and yellow. It is more than likely that the title of this LP was inspired by the original credit to the double-sided SAM'S SONG/PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY which, it may be recalled, read GARY CROSBY AND FRIEND. It went on to sell a million - which was a handy bit of pocket money for Number 1 Son!

> How delightful, too, to have Bing with Dixie Lee Crosby singing A FINE ROMANCE...pity the flip side of that fine record couldn't have been squeezed on to make another seventeen to end with!

I can do no better than to quote the final words of Ken Barnes as he writes on this sleeve: "This record presents Mr. Crosby at his happiest. So step right up and meet Bing with his friends - you'll never meet a more entertaining bunch of people."

Quite frankly, the same comment could be made of the entire collection, for Bing is not totally solo on any record - this apart from the fine musicians and top-notch orchestras

with whom he recorded and who are, inevitably, featured if not credited here. The transfer of the recordings onto the LPs was under the supervision of Chris. Ellis and there will be many who will congratulate him, and others responsible, for maintaining the original monophonic presentation.

This collection can be bought, new, only from WORLD RECORDS LTD., PO Box 11, Richmond, SURREY, TW9 1QP. Send no money; you will be invoiced against a money-back guarantee. But they are not on approval - and why should they be? You will be getting

THE VERY BEST OF BING!

Editor: As with all good reviewers, Bert Bishop leaves very little to add! I cannot help entertaining, however, a sneaking sympathy for compilers/sleeve writers of a Crosby collection. Their efforts come under the most terrifyingly hawk-like scrutiny from people who know their Crosby inside out and if there are faults, they will stand out like the proverbial sore thumb! I feel the small errors in this fabulous collection can be borne..... I would like to add, however, that while at the time of writing I haven't played the entire seven records those I have played are among the best transfers of 78s I've ever heard.

There are those who say "gimme the old 78 every time!" For me, they can have 'em! I prefer the smoother micro-groove versions. I don't really mean they can have them; I keep them for sentimental reasons - and for posterity!

Regarding Bert's remarks on the 1942/1947 versions of WHITE CHRISTMAS it will be necessary for me (it has been in the past!) two play bother versions concurrently to detect the differences. I believe the truth is that the 1942 master just wore out from overwork. It figures, as they say. I'm not a great "take" expert - unless the differences are so obvious as, in, say, the two versions of GALLAGHER & SHEAN, but JUST A-WEARYING FOR YOU has appeared on LP - I LOVE YOU TRULY, Coral LPS 7 - fairly recently with Take-B as against Take-A on the new set.

Members will realise that these albums cannot be bought singly; they are, as Bert described at the start, a packaged collection. But then, who who WANT them singly. I don't go along with those who are "complaining"; of course we have a lot of the songs but there are sufficient "new" ones to make the set worthwhile. And in any case, they are better reproduced here AND you get them in a refreshing, "new order" from the ones you've been listening to!

I would add this. It is a lovely set to OWN! To handle, to gaze at, to study...and that's before you start playing the records! Definitely the finest collection ever issued, with the possible exception, naturally, of BING'S HOLLYWOOD.

CAN IT BE THAT MGM ARE CASHING IN ON THE EFFORTS OF KEN BARNES AND UNITED ARTISTS, NOT TO MENTION WORLD RECORDS? Whatever the reason, there is a host of members who will be absolutely delighted that that company has reissued the elusive EL SENOR BING - and on a budget label, too! This time its called BING GOES LATIN. I had the rare pleasure of hearing it being played "over the system" in a record shop, which leads me to other things.

Record companies have a rare problem in distribution, not of their making. It has been extremely difficult to buy the new "single" ANYWHERE in South Wales. One or two said they would "order it" for me; I was so exasperated I showed my annoyance and said I would visit other shops. But it was a waste of time. When I remonstrated in one shop - the record was being played every day on the radio - I was tartly informed they weren't "allowed" to order any record unless they took 50 and could be sure of selling them. That means only one thing: the accursed, so-called, "Top Ten". Young people now in charge of a large

number of shops, or record departments, think no further than this moronic listing. I've noticed, too, that in the event of a Bing album appearing in the shop it soon disappears, and is never replaced. So, how do they know what sales they are missing? On the other hand, it can be appreciated that record shops are purely commercial propositions and many do not feel like stocking their shelves with records that kids aren't queuing up to buy. As I say, its a real problem. Never a week goes by that I don't get a letter - from a newcomer - who says, in effect, "I had no idea at all that Bing's albums were being re-issued in such numbers; or the vintage dance bands of yesteryear.....perhaps its because I've stopped going into record shops." No doubt, it is - but one can understand the aversion older people entertain about entering record shops. For a start, the decibels being hammered out are invariably a physical discomfort. There is a woman where I work who has, for weeks, been endeavouring to get the album THE BEST OF THE INK SPOTS. She was trying the shops I've mentioned - with youthful management. The point is, one of these shops did actually have the album but must have sold it when my colleague enquired. When she asked: can you order it for me? the devastating answer was: ITS BEEN DELETED! Of course it hadn't - but they just didn't want to know.

As I said, its a real problem for the record companies; how to get their wares to the public that would buy them. Happily, BING and GOLDEN YEARS are playing a tremendous part in enlightening those who had "given up".

Seems Bing is liable to change the lyric every time he sings THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT: I liked the one in TOP OF THE POPS...."....I see the chances that I took....and wonder how I took my WAGES!"

PERHAPS WE COULD HAVE SAVED A LOT OF SPACE AND A LOT OF REPORTING BY JUST PRINTING THIS LETTER FROM LES BRICE, 5 Rush Green Gardens, Romford,Essex for it says it all really. Yet, the space wasn't wasted, was it!

I've just written to Les Gaylor thanking him for his part in the fantastic Parkinson show last Friday. As I told him, I don't think Bing has put on a better show at any time in his career. This was Bing at his definitive - the matured Crosby showing every facet of his craft. His charm, wit and, of course, his fantastic singing. Its truly incredible to me that after 50 years of Bing, in the evening of his career, that I was able to see such a fantastic performance.

I once wrote, with regard to some other Bing collectors who preferred him in the earlier stages of his career: a line from Browning.....

"Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be...."

Last Friday at Shepherds Bush we saw the ultimate. I'd like to thank everybody connected with the show for making it all possible - Leslie Gaylor for starting the whole thing going, and to you Reg, and John Bassett, who through the pages of the magazine kept us in the picture and enabled us to get the tickets, and last but not least, I'd like to thank Bing for giving me a day that I shall never forget.

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That is typical of many letters received - for which we thank the writers very much. We gave the best advice possible in the June issue for, bear in mind, the show wasn't even dated until Bing was in this country. And when we finally got the date there wasn't much time....even so, I personally very happily though at great time and no little expense wrote dozens of letters and made many trunk telephone calls, especially to those who wrote saying "....is Bing here yet?" when he had been here (or in Scotland) for over a week! Many people got a delightful surprise, too - like Roy and Adrienne Dodds, of Derbyshire, for whom tickets for the show came as a birthday present!

CELLULOID CROSBY

...which title imputes no transparency on the character of Mr. C! It is merely the popular feature wherein

KEITH PARKINSON

reviews aspects of Bing's illustrious film career.....

Last summer saw the television programme planners make their annual visit to the vaults to bring old black and white movies to our screens whilst the seasonal reduction in viewing took place. This is far from a complaint because some films are like wine and improve with age. One pattern is beginning to develop each time these vintage reels are dusted off - the same faces crop up again and again. Quite often they have appeared in some Crosby picture or other.

This prompts the question: How many star names have appeared with Bing in a film? To find the answer I looked up the careers of all the major actors and actresses that emerged before 1945. The significance of that year is that to me it marks the first signs of the crumbling of the Hollywood star system. Independent producers were setting up shop, the first television sets were finding their way onto the market and movie-houses were no longer crammed with people craving escapism from the brutalities of War.

The original list I made was very lengthy so I confined it to actors and actresses who had appeared in the list of the Top Ten box office draws published by The Motion Picture Herald. One point that does stand out is that, with two exceptions - Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour - all the other performers reached their commercial or artistic peaks either before or after they were featured in a Crosby movie. For the purpose of this article I have disregarded the people who appeared in films in which Bing "guested", such as "Star- Spangled Rhythm", "Duffy's Tavern" and "Variety Girl".

To keep the article to a manageable length I have restricted my notes to the first and last screen appearances of the stars concerned together with the film or films which are generally regarded as representing their finest performances. In short, an attempt to encapsulate the scope of their acting career into half a dozen lines. First, the careers of the men in Bing's movie life.

Two of Bing's most commercially successful films co-starred him with FRED ASTAIRE. Both "Holiday Inn" (1942) and "Blue Skies" (1946) featured some of the best songs Bing has ever been called upon to sing. Born in 1899 Astaire was an established stage performer before he made his movie debut opposite Joan Crawford in 1933 in "Dancing Lady". Astaire's best musicals were "Top Hat" in 1935 and "Easter Parade" in 1948. He also came over very strong as a dramatic actor in "On the Beach" in 1959, and is now currently very successful in a film enjoying a big success, "The Towering Inferno".

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS (1883-1939) was a star on the wane when he re-made his 1917 movie "Reaching for the Moon" in 1931. His salary for the remake was 300,000 dollars. Bing only appeared in the film to sing one number, but his performance justified the making of the movie as far as I'm concerned. Fairbanks - and this is the Senior of course - made his first appearance in "The Lamb" (1915) and he is best remembered for actioners like "The Mask of Zorro" (1920), "Robin Hood" (1922) and "Thief of Bagdad" (1924) all of which are frequently quoted in histories of Hollywood in the "silent era". Fairbanks' last movie was "The Private Life of Don Juan", released in 1934.

Everyone seems to know at least one W.C.FIELDS quip. Fields (1879-1946) made his first film, "Pool Sharks" in 1915. Most of his films are well remembered, standout performances being in "If I Had a Million" (1932) "David Copperfield" (1935) - if only Selsnick had allowed him to perform his juggling act in THAT one - and "The Bank Dick" (1940). He made "Mississippi" with Bing in 1935 and his last appearance came ten years later in "Sensations of 1945".

CEDRIC HARDWICKE had a chequered career - and you may be surprised to learn he was penniless when he died in 1964. Born in 1893, he was twenty when he made the silent

"Rags to Riches". In fifty years of making films he turned out several outstanding performances, amongst which are Frollo in the 1939 "Hunchback of Notre Dame", Dr. Arnold in "Tom Brown's Schooldays" made the following year and Edward IV in the 1955 "Richard III" He had a tiny part in "The Pumpkin Eater" which was released the year he died. Many picturegoers will remember hi best for the performance he fave when Bing was a "Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" (1944).

Most of BOB HOPE'S best performances were in the "Road" films although he turned out two above-average performances in "The Paleface" (1948) with Jane Russell and "The Facts of Life" (1960) with Lucille Ball. He entered films at the age of 34 with "The Big Broadcast of 1938". Of late his films have been poorly received by critics and public alike, his last one, "Cancel My Reservation" (1972) being no exception.

You can always count on dependable FRED MacMURRAY for a good performance. Born in 1908 he was in films as an extra at the age of twenty ("Girls Gone Wild") and made his acting debut proper in "Grand Old Girl". He played together with Bing in "Sing you Sinners" in 1938 and was to give a top class performance six years later in Billy Wilder's "Double Indemnity". Two other outstanding parts were in "The Caine Mutiny" (1954) and "The Apartment" (1960). In the 1960s he was steadily employed making films for Walt Disney, and in 1973 he made "Charlie and the Angel" for that company.

What can be written about GROUCHO MARX that has not already found its way into print? He was a guest in Bing's "Mr. Music" (1950) after making some of the world's funniest films with his equally amusing brothers. Groucho was 34 when the film of the Brother's stage hit "The Cocoanuts" was released in 1929. "Animal Crackers", "Monkey Business", and "Horse Feathers" followed at annual intervals and Groucho was last seen in the Otto Preminger flop "Skidoo" in 1969.

Four years ago "Love Story" gave RAY MILLAND'S career a boost after 40 years in the movie business. Born in 1905, his first film was "The Plaything" made in 1929. He was in one of my favourite early Bing films, "We're Not Dressing" in 1934 and I do not think anyone will argue if I say his best performance was in Billy Wilder's "Lost Week-End" (1945). He starred in "Terror of the Wax Museum", released in 1974 in Britain.

BASIL RATHBONE (1892-1967) made his film debut in "The Fruitful Vine" (1921) although his best performance was as Mr. Murdstone in "David Copperfield" in 1935. He will always be remembered as Sherlock Holmes for the fourteen rather cheaply produced films he made in the role of the famous detective. His appearance with Bing in the 1940 "Rhythm on the River" was made in the middle of his "Holmes" period. Towards the end of his life he made some hastily constructed quickies, the last of which "Hillbillies in a Haunted House" was not shewn in this country, altho' it was shewn in the USA after his death.

When FRANCHOT TONE (1906-1969) appeared with Bing in "Here Comes the Groom" (1951) he was billed as "The man Jane Wyman doesn't prefer to Bing Crosby". His career, which began in 1932 with "The Wiser Sex" was past its best by the end of the 1930s. His two most memorable performances were given in "Lives of a Bengal Lancer" in 1935 and "Mutiny on the Bounty", released in the same year and featuring him in the part turned down by Robert Montgomery. His last performance was in "Mickey One" (1965).

The Barrymores helped ROLAND YOUNG'S career immensely. His first film was "Sherlock Holmes" with John Barrymore in 1922 and his first talkie was directed by Lionel Barrymore. Relatively early in his career he appeared with Bing in "Here is my Heart" (1934) and later in the 'Thirties he made a big impression in two comedies for Hal Roach, "Topper"in 1937 and its sequel "Topper Takes a Trip" two years later. I think his best part was that of Uriah Heep in the 1935 version of "David Copperfield", although his acting in "The Philadelphia Story"(1940) comes a close second. Born in 1887, he was busy until the time of his death in 1953 when his last film, "The Man from Tangiers" was released.

And now, again in alphabetical order, the ladies in Bing's film life:

JOAN BENNETT'S first screen appearance was made at the age of 18 as an extra in "The Divine Lady". She had not reached her peak when she made two films with Bing in 1935 -

"Mississippi" and "Two for Tonight". She made a lasting impression as "The Woman in the Window" with Edward G. Robinson in 1944 and is perhaps best remembered as Spencer Tracey's wife in the comedies "Father of the Bride" (1950) and "Father's Little Dividend" (1951). She has been inactive since she made "Desire in the Dust"with Raymond Burr in 1960.

For her part opposite Bing in "The Bells of St. Mary's" INGRID BERGMAN received 175,000 dollars. It was a performance entirely in tune with the film's sentiment. She was born in 1915 and made her first film in Swiden in 1934. Her first Hollywood movie - "Intermezzo" (1939) - was a hit and she achieved two of her best performances shortly afterwards in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", the Spencer Tracey version in 1941, and "Casablanca" the following year with Humphrey Bogart. Her last film to be released in this country was the disappointing "A Walk in the Spring Rain" with Anthony Quinn in 1970.

JOAN BLONDELL has worn well, as her appearance in the 1965 film "The Cincinnati Kid" will testify. Born in 1909 she was first seen with James Cagney in "Sinner's Holiday" (1930). Her best performance came as a drunk in "Stage Struck" (1936) with William Powell and it was three years later that she was in the Crosby movie "East Side of Heaven". Her last role was in "The Sphinx" (1970), a film given a cinematic release in the USA and sold direct to television in this country.

BEBE DANIELS (1901-1971) was in films from a very early age. She supported Harold Lloyd in many of his "Lonesome Luke" comedies before appearing for Cecil B. De Mille in the 1919 silent success "Male and Female". Her best film was "Rio Rita" (1929) opposite John Boles, and two years later Bing had a song in "Reaching for the Moon" in which she starred with Douglas Fairbanks. Her last film was "The Lyons in Paris" (1955). She had a stroke in 1963 from which she never fully recovered.

MARION DAVIES (1897-1961) only just made it as a star. She was first seen in "Runaway Romary" in 1917 and had her best part in J.M.Barrie's "Quality Street" in 1927. Paramount starred her in "Going Hollywood" in 1934 in the hope that her appearance on screen with Bing would boost her flagging popularity. It did little to help and the same year she appeared with Gary Cooper in "Operator 13" which also did not help. "Ever Since Eve" was made in 1937 - the year of her retirement.

1936 was a busy year for FRANCES FARMER (1914-1970). She made her movie debut in "Too Many Parents", starred opposite Bing in "Rhythm on the Range" and gave her best performance in "Come and Get It". We may have seen more of her on the screen but for her drink problem. Her last film was "The Party Crashers" in 1958 when she had fourth billing. Frances died four years ago from an overdose of barbiturates.

JOAN FONTAINE was born one year after her famous sister, Olivia de Havilland in 1917. In 1935 she appeared in "No More, Ladies" and then went on to reach her peak in "Rebecca" (1940) for which PICTUREGOER readers voted her a gold medal. She made another outstanding film in 1948 - "Letter from an Unknown Woman" - and in the same year appeared with Bing in"Emperor Waltz". She was last seen in Hammer's "The Witches" in 1966.

Born in 1902, MIRIAM HOPKINS got a good part in her first film "Fast and Loose" (1931) which starred Carole Lombard. Her best performance came the following year in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" with Paul Muni in the title roles and in 1934 she made "She Loves me Not" with Bing. Her last appearance was in "The Chase" in 1966.

If ever one of Bing's female leads was ever put to the test it must be BETTY HUTTON in her dual role in "Here Come the Waves" (1944). Born in 1921 she made her first film in 1942 in "The Fleet's In". Everyone remembers her for "Annie Get Your Gun" (1950) since which time she has done little film work. Her last picture was "Spring Reunion" in 1957. In 1966 she walked off the set of "Red Tomahawk", a film which was to have reunited her with Howard Keel.

The only female that gave her best performance in a Bing film is DOROTHY LAMOUR. Born in 1914 her mediocre was enlivened by her appearances in all the "Road" films. She was first seen in "The Jungle Princess" in 1936 and perhaps "The Hurricane" with Jon Hall in 1937 is her best non-Bing film. In addition to the "Road" films she was Bing in "Dixie" in 1944. Her last part in a film was in "The Phynx" in 1970 - a film sold direct to IBN for television showing in the UK.

Some will argue that CAROLE LOMBARD had not reached her cinematic peak when she died in an air-crash in 1942. She was in "A Perfect Crime" at the age of 13 when she was Monte Blue's daughter. She was with Bing in "We're Not Dressing" in 1934 and in the same year she was in the successful "Twentieth Century" although her best performance was given in "My Man Godfrey" in 1936. Her last part was in "To Be Or Not to Be" with Jack Benny in 1941.

IDA LUPINO was born in 1918 and at the age of 15 she was in films. Her first was"Her First Affair" in 1933. She was with Bing in "Anything Goes" in 1936 and gave her best performance as Humphrey Bogart's moll in "High Sierra" (1941). She played Steve McQueen's mother in "Junior Bonner" (1972), her last screen appearance to date.

Whoever was responsible for allowing the film of "South Pacific" to be made without the star of the stage show being in the movie has a lot of MARY MARTIN fans to pacify. Born in 1913 she first appeared in "Rage of Paris" in 1938 as Danielle Darrieux's dancing teacher. Her best performance was in "Kiss the Boys Goodbye" in 1941, spoofing the search for Scarlett O'Hara. She was the feminine lead in two Bing films - "Rhythm on the Range" and "Birth of the Blues", released in 1940 and 1941 respectively. "Main Street to Broadway" (1952) was her last film to date.

ANN SHERIDAN (1915-1967) made her film debut in "Search for Beauty" in 1934. The following year she appeared with Bing in "Mississippi" and then went on to give her best performance in "Angels with Dirty Faces" (1938) with James Cagney, and "They Drive by Night" (1940) with George Raft and Humphrey Bogart. Her last film was "Woman and the Hunter" (1957).

And that's the list. A typical Crosby comment would be that part of his success is due to the people with whom he was worked. If we accept this then, although I have only scratched the surface in assessing the careers of Bing's movie colleagues, most of the aforementioned must admit that they owe part of their popularity to their appearance in a Crosby film.

> To conclude, I would like to return to a theme briefly mentioned in the opening sentences to this article - box-office popularity. An analysis of the MOTION PICTURE HERALD Top-Ten from its inception to the end of the 1940s shows that only 47 different names featured in the 130 places to fill (ten a year for 13 years). This means that on average each name appears very nearly 3 times, with Bing appearing eight times and topping the list on four occasions, a record on both counts. What is more, the only musical film to become the box-office film of the year was - Disney's "Snow White".

Editor: Apart from giving a new slant to Crosbyana, what wonderful memories Keith's article evokes! One feels one could write a book about almost every name he mentioned - he admits he only "scratched the surface".....to the younger, newer, fans it must also make fascinating reading: films made before they were born and Bing acting with beautiful women, singing wonderful songs....what an air of mystique there is about that golden age of Hollywood?

Joan Blondell! My heart achedwith love for her when I was about 16. Still does, sometimes.;..Ann Sheridan, the "Oomph" girl....beautiful Carole Lombard, who died so tragically....Mary Martin with whom I still feel Bing made his finest visual duet - "Wait 'Til the Sun Shines Nellie!" Remember how Bing had to "nudge" her into a jazz rendering... as for the wonderful Astaire, what did it MATTER what the story was, or even the acting for that matter, so long as Fred danced! Ah indeed, Keith is a great memory-stirrer.

On pl2 of the last BING Keith wrote: "Bing never made it as a TIME cover profile...." but reference to the American Club Crosby's REPRINT SERIES (Vol. 1, No. 1.) shows Bing as the subject of front cover and inside feature for Volume XXXVII of TIME, April 7, 1941.

THE TRADING POST

A special facility for members wherein they may advertise their wants, disposals, exchanges &c. There is no charge for taking space here but please be brief and mark entries "Trading Post" on a separate sheet of paper. This is not intended for full-scale commercial advertising but purely a "trading post" for members.

WANTED: (desperately!) the WHITE CHRISTMAS LP (with Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney). The soundtrack album of the film of 1954: LAT 8044 - ROY BISSELL, 26 Charlotte Rd., Wednesbury, WS10 7NE, West Midlands.

WANTED: The Bing Crosby Story: The Early Jazz Years CE2E201 -RAY CLARKE, Myrtle Grove, Barkisland, Halifax, W. Yorks was startled to be told this record was deleted in 1973 - by Express Records, Bradford. Carey's has been suggested to Ray but can anyone help?

WANTED: BING'S HOLLYWOOD No.1 "Easy to Remember" - LA8674 BING SINGS THE HITS: LAT8154 HIGH TOR; LAT 8331 IN A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN; LAT 8334 DRIFTING AND DREAMING; LAT 8550 LITTLEONE/HAPPY PRICE:; DL8374 SOME FIND OLD CHESTNUTS; DL8687 AROUND THE WORLD WITH BING; DL3769 or AH BING SINGS FOR CHILDREN; GLP ALI BABA AND THE 40 THIEVES, and AH 198 JACK B. NIMBLE - Miss Pat Forster, 11 Norfolk Close, St. Margarets, East Twickenham, Midd'x.

WANTED: Bing's records of STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE; SECOND TIME AROUND, and the 1947 recording of I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS (this was on Ace of Hearts 24 by the way) - Howard Rowley, Denby Lane, Codnor, Derbyshire.

(Howard is the latest to enquire for the first two records; these are so much in demand it would surely pay to have these records reissued - Ed.)

JACK FOREHAN, 47 Vida Str., Essendon, Victoria 3040, Australia has Nos. 1-76 of the CROSBY COLLECTOR if anyone cares to make an offer.

AN UNUSUAL AND UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY COMES FROM FRED REYNOLDS, 69 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RQ:

I want to sell two original oil paintings of Bing; one is of the "young" Bing, and the other of a more mature Bing. Both are framed and varnished and the size of the "mature" is 20" x 18" and the other approx. 18" x 16".Both these portraits are by artist Frank Coram. The price is £20 each or, for convenience, I would accept £35 for the pair. Anyone desiring to see these paintings can do so by arrangement: Tel. 021-783-2847. (Ed. I have seen these paintings hanging in Fred's home at Birmingham and they are excellent portraits. They were painted a few years ago by Mr. Coram and only a few are in existence.)

WANTED: Also by Fred Reynolds, address above, the Coral album DAYDREAMING (CPS 113) - surprisingly this album and other Corals are disappearing very, very quickly, no doubt because of the change from Decca to EMI for Bing's reissued recordings, and the former are deleting such albums.

WANTED: A copy of 7" UK Brunswick EP OE9424 in the best possible condition. Please write to Kenneth E. Gray, 6301 N. Sheridan Rd., Apt. 7-B, Chicago, Illinois 60660, USA.

Advertisers should state if a taping of their wants is acceptable in the absence of actual records.

WANTED: LAT 8505 HOLIDAY IN EUROPE; LAT 8217 NEW TRICKS; MGM c868 EL SENOR BING, and L10675 TRUST YOUR DESINTY TO YOUR STAR and L10676 GIGI; RHC 040560 STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE/RHC 040561 TOMORROW'S MY LUCKY DAY. Mr. S. COPPEN, 68 Maxey Rd., Dagenham, Essex. - who adds: "I've virtually given up trying to get these records." (Anyone going to prove him wrong!)

JIM DOUGLAS, 72 McLachlan Str., Larbert, Stirlingshire, FK5 3HN wants to know if any members are also interested in GUY MITCHELL.....

(advts. cont. over....

"DID I RECORD THAT?
—WELL I NEVER!"

DON LOVE, 23 Marina Gardens, Cheshunt, Herts is so near to a complete collection that for that very reason (the records he wants MUST be scarce!) he feels he is on a forlorn quest. Still, we're getting new, keen, members all the while so here are the records that Don so desperately wants:

Amer. Decca. 27019 WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN; 27623 WE ALL HAVE A SONG IN OUR HEARTS and/or Eng. Brunswick 04868 same title; Amer. Decca 29212 OH! TELL ME WHY and/or Aust. Columbia DO70131 same title. Amer. Victor 24078 FAR FROM HOME/HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY; Aust. Parl. A2747 I'M CRAZY OVER YOU and/or ENG. PARL E6148, Amer. OK 41228, Odeon ONY 41228, French Odeon F193314 all same title; and Aust. Crosbyana Liby ADESTE FIDELIS/LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS.

SURPRISINGLY, no-one has so far shewn interest in the abbreviated CALL ME LUCKY mentioned in the last issue as being part of a new, hard-cover READERS' DIGEST edition, including potted versions of four other stories. It is at least an excellent stop-gap in the absence of a pukka copy. Offers - non-astronomical! - still awaited.

DICK PEARSON of 45 Park View Rd., Tottenham, London N17 offers some excellent advice:

> With the current discussions on where Bing material can best be found (in London) I feel I must mention a small Harlequin shop in the Soho area - Old Compton Street to be precise. They have a fine selection of Bing there including THE BEST OF BING (USA double album) and many of the quite unusual imports. I also got THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND there a few weeks back and you don't see that one very often. I think members should know that stocks are far superior to the Harlequin Shop in New Bond Street and Oxford Street mentioned in the last issue.

The advt. that began this feature was only a "taster"! Here is ROY BISSELL again, address as above:

I have the following LPs for "swop": Coral CPS 81 RHYTHM ON THE RANGE; A of H 145 BELOVED HYMNS; Coral CPS 79 I LOVE YOU TRULY: Coral CPS 90 SONG OF THE ISLANDS; RCA Victor WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS LSA 3094 and LAT 8382 Vol 2 of A Musical Autobiography (26 nos. on this LP with linking dialogue) adapted from the full set. MY WANTS: BING'S HOLLYWOOD Nos. 7, 12, 13, and 15; SONGS I WISH I'D SUNG Bruns. LAT 8138 or any other version, and RETURN TO PARADISE, Reprise R-6106

> THERE IS CONSTANT REFERENCE TO THAT UNIQUE SET OF 15 ALBUMS, BING'S HOLLYWOOD (one reader thinks this was only available in the complete set of 15 records, not so - they could be bought singly) AND THE PROSPECTS OF IT BEING REISSUED. Well, who knows? It really was unique; no other artist in recording history has had such an issue - and given its own Catalogue Nos. BING 1 - 15. In the normal course of events I would imagine that EMI/MCA would think very hard indeed before embarking on such a mammoth reissue; but with the current resurgence of interest and enthusiasm for Mr. C. it may well be on the cards. There can be little doubt that as the years go by the true magnitude of Bing's fabulous career is being more and more appreciated by more and more people, and this set which covers such a host of Bing's film songs from 1934-1954 provides colossal evidence of Bing's screen activities. John Bayles of Ilford, and Howard Rowley, Codnor, are particularly concerned about a reissue. For them and so many others let's hope this fine set does again become available.

The very comprehensive series of albums by Decca's Ace of Hearts is also in great demand; odd how we're inclined to think of these as "new" for it was in the early Sixties that they began to appear! A whole host of them, too:

EDGAR LAWSON, 19 Belgrave St., Liscard, Wallasey, Merseyside is anxious to obtain the following: All AH Nos. 17, Old Masters Vol. 2; 24 Vol. 3; 122 BING IN PARIS; 139 BING SINGS FOR CHILDREN; 145 BELOVED HYMNS; 164 BING - RARE STYLE. Edgar adds a note:

> Do you mean that someone can tape for me some of Bing's early 30s songs? I have some of these but from the listings there are a great many songs

I have not seen on LP - songs like "Shadows on the Window", "Love, You Funny Thing", "Starlight", "Lazy Day" from 1932 onwards...." This is the cue, therefore, for our

"BING" TAPE SERVICE by BOB ROBERTS.

Operating in conjunction with the ICC, the "BING" Tape Service provides members with the opportunity of acquiring high-quality tapes ("open reel" or cassette) of virtually anything ever sung or spoken by Bing Crosby into a microphone during the course of his long and varied career. Strict legal copyright clauses are applicable to private tape recordings for obvious reasons but these special facilities are available via the ICC without offence to anyone.

All tapings are fully guaranteed and recorded dual-track (if "open reel") with a choice of speed and spool size to suit the facilities of members. Delivery is usually within 21 days of receipt of order and payment. Naturally, it is hardly realistic to request, say, just one number or song. A suitably-sized tape can usually be compiled at members' request.

Further information on material available can be obtained by sending to the following address, enclosing SAE:

BOB ROBERTS (ICC Publicity Officer)
"Bob's Stores",
56 Thorold Road,
CHATHAM, KENT.
(England).

This does not, of course, preclude members from making contacts with fellow-members on a tape-exchange basis when mutual benefit can be derived. We are happy to know that this state of affairs exists - but Mr. Roberts is the unfailing authority!

Some collect matchbox tops; or beer-mats, stamps, coins - but can ANYTHING compare with collecting Crosby records? We think not - but there can be many frustrations! You have read of Don Love wanting just half-a-dozen records to make a "full set" - not so long ago he located one of these desperately-wanted records - in Australia. Negotiations were completed, the record ultra-carefully packed for its long, long journey to Cheshunt... can you imagine Don's feelings when the box finally arrived? Maybe, but I reckon you CANNOT guess his feelings when he found the record - was broken into eight pieces! Pieces of eight indeed!

Then there was Mike Crampton of Leeds who was presented with a very, very, rare record indeed of Paul Whiteman, with Bing singing...he left the home of his benefactor bearing this record as though it were the Crown Jewels. To be ultra certain, and to keep his eye on it on the journey back to Leeds from London, he carefully put it on the front seat of his car, beside him. He had gone barely a hundred yards when he was flagged down: "Going anywhere near the station?" "Yes, jump in!"....and he did, to sit on the precious record! And this time it was left in considerably more than eight pieces. The passenger wasn't too upset when he realised it was an OLD record....after all, it might have been a new one....

But of course, its not always like that. There are those wonderful, wonderful, days when you pick up a Columbia 78 in bright, shining, virtually mint condition.....for 5p ...and the whole world suddenly seems a wonderful place. Or like the reader who wrote the other day to say he strolled into a junkshop - and picked up a hard-cover copy of Bing's CALL ME LUCKY! ..... also for 5p..... Happy, happy day!

PROMPT RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTIONS WHEN THE LITTLE REMINDER IS ENCLOSED GOES A LONG WAY TO ENSURING THE CONTINUANCE OF BING AND THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE.....thanks!

TRADING POST (Cont)

HELLO MUM, that lovely War-time record of Bing's is wanted by David Coward, 10 Kennedy Court, Poplar Rd., Ashford, Midd'x....."I have this on 78 but it has cracked and I am unable to get it on any album...." This record was tremendously popular, not unnaturally, during the War but is seldom heard these days.

NOEL J. MOULD, 62 Old Westland Rd., Off Cavehill Rd., Belfast, 15, N. Ireland is anxious to obtain a copy of the Crosby-Whiteman album CBS OL 2830 if anyone can help.

The reference to the War-time HELLO MOM! record reminds me of another record of that era which seemed to be always being played on request programmes during the War - MANDY IS TWO.... one seldom hears it these days, and speaking entirely from memory and not rushing to the discography, I don't think its ever appeared on LP. Charming song, too. Anyone remember it?

MR. E. P. ALLAN, 16 Kirk Street, EDINBURGH. EH6 5EY has for exchange:

BING AND CONNEE LA8558 (that's a 10" album), and BING CROSBY on Napoleon NLP11007 for taped copies of the following:

PHILCO RADIO JAN. 5 1949, with guests BETTY GRABLE/HARRY JAMES.
CHESTERFIELD Feb. 15, 1950, with guest AL JOLSON.
CHESTERFIELD Feb. 22. 1950 with guests the ANDREWS SISTERS.
CHESTERFIELD Mar. 29, 1950 also with the Andrews Sisters.

ROY CHAPPELL (of whom you will also read elsewhere in this issue) 44, Barlow Rd., Levenshulme, Manchester, M19 3DA has now acquired a sound-projector (8mm. Standard, Super, and single whatever that means!) and would very much like to hear from members who have Bing films. He has ROAD TO MORROCCO, a film of excerpts from BLUE SKIES, and a couple of Mack Sennett "shorts" and is anxious to obtain more. Apart from the Crosby films he has some excellent Jolson films. Roy really wants to know where Bing films can be bought.

THE EARLY BING was the subject of an interesting letter from STANLEY AUSTIN, of Yiewsley, Midd'x:

I have been a keen admirer of Bing for 44 years - but as he has been going for 50 years this left 6 years completely unknown - for me, anyway. Only in very recent years, with this sudden upsurge of reissues, has it been possible for me to explore this unknown territory. And what fascination there has been in this safari! I don't think I have ever wavered in my admiration for Bing over all those years, but I feel now that I know and understand him better and, assuming that were possible, like him even more.

Let's approach these unknown delights slowly and calmly...by listening, first of all, to his first big solo PLEASE when, of course, he was nearest to his early days. Try to listen behind the vocal to a superb shimmering curtain of the guitar accompaniment - and remember the name Eddie Lang - for like so many other names we meet, it will crop up time and time again.

There were two great names in this period of numerous great names who stood out amongst all the others - and one of them was, of course, the "much-misunderstood musician" Paul Whiteman. Let's listen to his band playing AFTER YOU'VE GONE. In this we have not only the Crosby vocal and not only the Lang guitar, for here Eddie is joined by his almost inseparable companion, Joe Venuti, the legendary jazz violinist. Straightaway we have a most enjoyable path which many reissue records allow us to explore: Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang. Try it, I can promise you many delights - and you will make many new friends on the way - the fabulous Jean Goldkette Orchestra and all its star-studded brilliance, and Joe Venuti's Blue Four which included at various times superb artists such as Adrian Rollini and Don Murray.

But it is all too easy to be tempted along these side paths...we must drag ourselves back to the Main Highway of the Whiteman orchestra. Listen to LOVE NEST or LONELY MELODY - and

suddenly we're hit smack between the eyes by the indescribable cornet playing of Bix Beiderbecke. Now we are REALLY hooked - this is no side path but a shining broad new Highway which we must follow. Before we know it, we are at the start of it all - we listen to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, because they were the original inspiration of Bix (and very likely, Bing too). We know that Bix admired the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, so we listen and we also enjoy Paul Mares and Leon Rappolo.

And we must find the start of Bix himself - rather like finding the source of the Nile, so we buy the recordings of the Wolverines (by this time we are casting an anxious eye at our bank balance). We then read how Red Nichols was so impressed by Bix that he com- completely changed his style. So, we follow Red Nichols for a while and find him with The Goofus Five - and what do you know? Here's our old friend Adrian Rollini again. And we listen to later recordings of the Frank Trumbauer small band and we find not only Bix, but also Adrian Rollini, plus Eddie Lang and Joe Venuti.

> This is the real joy - every new record we buy. We wonder what new pleasures await us - but also (and perhaps more enjoyable) which old friend we are going to meet again.

But we have been patient long enough. Let's get straight to the real hub of the matter - the period of the Whiteman Band which lasted for much too short a time - November 1927 to September 1929 - when the band reached its heights. Listen to any recording of the period - listen even to the notorious sugary concert arrangements, such as MELANCHOLY BABY and GYPSY, and hear how the magic of Bix lifted the band to unheard of heights. But in particular, listen to the superb arrangements with Bing and Bix as the stars - LOUISIANA, REACHING FOR SOMEBODY, BABY DON'T MEAN 'MAYBE', FROM MONDAY ON - there's been nothing like it before or since.

It was too good to last - but you wish it would. Heresy of Heresies, we find ourselves wishing that Bing hadn't left to join Gus Arnheim and so on to solo glory - we certainly find ourselves hopelessly wishing that Bix hadn't found such a tragic end.

But we are much wiser for our journey into the past....we know now why Bing has such an instinctive feeling for harmony and timing, particularly noticeable in duets with all and sundry - and why he was able, even in the most romantic ballad, to introduce rhythmic breaks and subtle changes in melody. Again, nothing like it before...and certainly not since. And all this research into the past started with an admiration for Bing; now I realise I owe him yet another debt - by his introducing me to this wonderful world of superb musicians which had been unknown to me for so long.

Editor: Stan's letter will undoubtedly be illuminating to our younger, and perhaps newer, readers. Bing did indeed work with the greatest pioneers of music; that's why he is apt to say he would have worked with them for nothing! Why he took his wages....in fact. And as Stan has pointed out again, the rhythmic approach, the phrasing, the extemporising of these musicians certainly rubbed off on Bing. Nevertheless, for all those who come under the spell of Venuti, Lang, Teagarden, Trumbauer, Rollini - as Stan Austin most assuredly has! - there remain those for whom the names mean nothing - and never will! That's what makes all music, all Crosbyana, such a wonderful study. And this letter of Stan Austin's leads us naturally into a book review by KEITH PARKINSON; and if Stan hasn't this book no doubt he will hasten to obtain it:

"BIX, MAN AND LEGEND" — Reviewed by Keith Parkinson

There will be very few people reading this magazine who have never heard, or heard of, Bix Beiderbecke - a revered figure in the jazz world because of his fine cornet-playing. He is featured on several Bing or Rhythm Boys items for Paul Whiteman on both Columbia and Victor records. Quarter have now published this book, title above, and this is the most informative book about the early Crosby career since CALL ME LUCKY. The authors, Richard M. Sudhalter (now leading the New Paul Whiteman Orch in this country), Philip R. Evans and William Dean-Myatt have squeezed as much information as possible into over 500 pages of fact and illustrations. They have interviewed Bix's contemporaries and gone to original sources so as to present as accurate a picture as possible of the legendary jazz

player, whose style is still imitated almost 50 years after his death. The authors began their research in 1957 and the completed manuscript reached the publishers in 1973.

What do we learn of Bing's career with Whiteman? The prelude of the filming of KING OF JAZZ told in detail; anecdotes about the Whiteman band; a comprehensive chronology giving details of the band's "Old Gold" broadcasts. These began in 1929 and lasted for one hour. Here is an extract of the Crosby detail from the programme, for instance, aired on July 30, 1929:

BROADWAY MELODY: (Crosby solo)
MY DEAR (Waltz): (with Crosby vocal)
HINDUSTAN: (Rhythm Boys vocal)
NOBODY'S FAULT BUT YOUR OWN: (Crosby solo).

In addition to this broadcast the Rhythm Boys were appearing nightly during the same week at the Montmarte Cafe without Whiteman and were headline attraction at the Orpheum Theatre, both in Los Angeles. The book also abounds in discographical detail and while I could go on for a long, long, time about this book I will just advise you, if interested in Bing and his early career, to buy it. It will be unnecessary for anyone else to write a book about Bix - this book must say it all.

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THIS IS THE VERY FIRST MAGAZINE for several new readers: and we hope they enjoy it together with older members.....

Among them is Mr. STUART PARRY, of Manchester, who recently suffered a burglary at his home and among the items taken was a collection of Crosby records - no doubt to be wantonly discarded later. Everyone in Crosbyana will be able to understand what this loss meant to Stuart..... Then there is Mr. A. H. BLOOD, of 597 Osmaston Rd., Derby... Arthur, that is, should get in touch with ROY CHAPPELL, for Arthur too has just acquired 8mm sound projector - and THE ROAD TO MOROCCO...no doubt they can work something out to mutual advantage. Anyone else addicted to sound-movies is welcome to correspond with both Arthur and Roy....

Then Mrs. Betty Perkins had the lovely idea of "joining" her husband, Gerald, as a birthday present. We hope it IS a nice present and that Gerald (and Betty) enjoy their first BING, and their association with the ICC. They live in Loscoe, Derbyshire.

RON BOYLE, of Weymouth is another "first"; Michael Holmes, of London, W4., - MRS. MARGARET McCUNE, of PORT GLASGOW, another of those kindly welcoming Scots.,,,(I hope her introductory letter is squeezed in somewhere!); Jean Spencer of Hemel Hempstead; Mr. G. Salvagnac, of Eversley, Hants - COLIN WILLIAMS of South Woodford (who appears an exceptionally enthusiastic member); Mr. J. WRIGHT, of Hucknall, Notts. A warm welcome to Crosbyana to all of them.

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FROM THE OBSERVER, of SUNDAY 24 August, i.e. the week before the Parkinson Show was screened, there appeared the following under the heading of BEST OF THE WEEK:

A CHAT SHOW IS MORE THAN TALK: Putting on a chat show looks easy enough. Find a journalist who can talk on equal terms with the famous. Look in Celebrity Bulletin to see who is in town. Find a catchy tune to play the programme in. Then let two or three "personalities" converse with the interviewer and each other. Yet you have only to listen to some of those commercial radio talk-ins to realise how insufficient is that formula. Better study Frost, or Harty, or PARKINSON (11.00 BBC1) back for another 39 Saturdays, on a good night, to see how carefully a real chat-show is created.

Bing Crosby is Parky's opening guest. As Bing is singing better now than he has done for 20 years, producer Richard Drewett decided to bring in a large orchestra and make the show half music. Parkinson himself has been coached to join in The Pleasure of Your Company.

Drewett explains: "The interview programme is as artificial an art form as opera. You have to start from the assumption that to create the illusion of intimacy in public is

a calculated performance on the part of both questioner and questioned. The mix is all-important; Crosby can stand alone, as can Fred Astaire, whom we have coming up. But otherwise, our best shows have been when we have put three superficially disparate people - Trevor Howard, Harold Pinter, Freddie Trueman - together and found a strong link between them and Mike, in their case cricket."

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"CROSBY CAN STAND ALONE..." Indeed he can, and has, right from the start.....

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BING ON THE BOX ---by BERT BISHOP

"Where's it all going to end!" asked Editor Reg in a recent letter, referring to the fact that for this issue of BING there is such a largesse of listening and viewing time to talk about that, unfortunately, some good copy is going to waste for lack of space to do it all justice. At one time Bing was apparently giving an interview to anybody who upped to him with a mike; then it was decided that he might suffer from over-exposure and he took a well-earned break from the limelight - which is just as well for THIS reviewer! Well, it all began with JUNIOR CHOICE on Saturday, 21 June at 9am when Ed Stewart played the first pre-release airing of THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT. It was followed by a further airing when Jean Challis introduced it in her mid-morning programme on its release date - 27 June. Thereafter it seemed quite impossible to hold it back! San Costa was quick to give it a spin and Len Jackson found Bing a spot on TWO'S BEST. Thus was Bing's 50th anniversary special recording launched in Britain.

Mike Aspell of Radio Capital (listenable only in London and its environs) came up with quite a scoop when he coaxed Bing to that predominantly "pop" station's studio on the 18 July. Seems Bing was there from around 10.30-11.15am but despite much knob-twiddling my tuner would not co-operate. Must get a better aerial - but if anybody has a recording of that guest spot perhaps they would be kind enough to contact me so that a report of the content may be published in the next issue.

"For the first time in the history of the Terry Wogan show - free coffee! - in honour of our guest, BING CROSBY!" But Bing didn't risk a BBC biscuit for he felt they looked a little "tired"! TERRY WOGAN on Radio 2 22 July - a programme that goes out between 7.02 and 9.02am and which does not normally feature guests. However, this bright and breezy DJ was considered a preferable alternative to Pete Murray, who had the pleasure of Bing's company last February. The Wogan programme followed the usual pattern of chat and records - all Crosby vocals except one - and whilst it was familiar stuff it was sufficiently entertaining and informative on current events so far as they involved Bing's activities. Bing mentioned all the many golf courses he had been playing with his sons, and that he was the first person to introduce the now familiar Pro-Am Tournament, of which there are now many. Wogan had been reading a proof copy of Charles Thompson's biography BING - and discovered that a certain 'Machine-Gun' Jack McGurn had once competed in a Crosby Pro-Am: "Not a man to be beaten; but unlikely to play at St. Andrews!"

Bing prefers racing in the UK because of the variety of courses and the longer distances as opposed to the tracks and events in the USA. He had a share of the horse that ran in the King George and Queen Elizabeth Stakes and which also won the Irish Derby. Bing accepted the trophy and, prompted by the race-goers, sang a few bars of WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING. From out of the crowd there came a lone voice: "I can't see ya, Bing - I can't see ya!" This happened a couple of times until Bing stopped and said: "Well, what do you want me to do?" "Would ya stand on ya wallet!" came the response. Apochryphal, no doubt, but amusing coming from Bing with his Irish accent.

Bing spoke of his album with Astaire, and went into some detail concerning Kathy and his family; but the programme was basically lighthearted with the inevitable gags on Bob Hope and glimpses of his Whiteman days. Bing slipped a quick whistle into the recording of THEY ALL LAUGHED, which brought a request for a little more which was forth-coming

just before the final track was played - the new single. Other songs featured were MR. GALLACHER & MR. SHEAN, WAY DOWN YONDER, HIGH HOPES, SAN ANTONIO ROSE and FANCY MEETING YOU HERE! Bing over-ran 9 o'clock news time by 15 seconds with - a racing tip! A rare occurrence on the BBC - but then, so is an hour of Bing on Radio 2.

The following day at 3.50pm Radio 4 presented its usual Weds. feature programme, JACK DE MANIO PRECISELY in which, as the Radio Times says: "Jack de Manio meets the famous, the not-so-famous and sometimes the downright obscure. No need to say in which category his first guest came for only the famous would have Mr. de Manio scurrying to a guest with a tape-recorder! He made it to Bing's hotel in 10 minutes flat after a phone call advising him the interview was on. "How did you get here in 10 minutes - by helicopter?" inquired the mildly surprised Bing. But from then on the interview followed predictable lines insofar as Bing was obliged to answer the same old questions. I guess that for a listening audience there will always be some hearing it for the first time but Bing has made it known that he gets a little tired of the repetition. He generally manages to enliven the cross-talk with some off-the-cuff comment and in this case it occurred when discussing autograph-hunters.

> Bing expressed his dislike of an accompanying entourage and said how he far preferred to travel around alone because of his concern for other's welfare and entertainment; quoting Sinatra and Bob Hope with his gag-writers and masseurs.

Only the truly dedicated Bing addict and reviewer would sit thro' TOP OF THE POPS to catch sight and sound of Bing! But it WAS his first TV appearance on the current visit and having survived the cacophony and the disturbed equilibrium of the rest of the family there is little to note other than that he was announced as being the "man who has been top of the pops for 50 years," and that Bing gave the gyrating teeny-boppers a personal and live performance of THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT. He closed the song with a breezy "Go girls go..." They did - and so did I, to the "off" switch. It was a treat while Bing was on, and he gave the close-up cameramen suitable expression to match the lyric as he sat casually on a stool, using a hand-mike older, wiser and assuredly in better voice than anyone else present. I'm bound to say he looked a little out of place but it was in a good cause. Just to fill in the facts, Bing appeared around 7.45 in this BBC 1 TV programme on Thursday 24 July.

> Far more encouraging and lively was the full half-hour interview he had before an audience in the studio of the ITV LONDON production "TODAY" in which Llew Gardner did his homework and put some perceptive questions. As this occurred on Friday 25 July it meant that Bing had been prominently featured three days in a row. Following the news it was certainly peak viewing time at 6.pm and must have attracted a sizeable viewing audience, although I understand this programme is only seen in the London area.

Bing was rather redundantly introduced to the audience after which a film clip from HIGH SOCIETY - "Now you Has Jazz" - was shewn by way of being an indelible introduction. Llew Gardner soon siezed on the lyric to "THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT" as a good basis from which to launch his interview and had Bing remarking how touched he was when people came up to him in the street and said how much they enjoyed the song, or a programme in which it has been featured - "That's part of an entertainer's food and drink...that's your life."

Bing felt he hadn't taken too many chances, having left all his business affairs in the hands of good advisers. In fact Gardner suggested that Bing's life had been "a nice unrolled pathway all the time". With this Bing was agreeable mainly on the basis of that he liked what he was doing and always had. Perhaps it might be worth observing here that to like what you are doing rather than doing what you like is the secret of success. It may well be true that Bing would have trodden the same pathway had he earned any money or not; but Llew Gardner was quick to note that Bing had "picked up a little bread on the way" and flippantly threw in a figure of 30 million, not saying whether he meant American dollars or pounds sterling! Bing emphatically denied this figure and quickly drew attention to Hope's alleged millions! As Bing had arrived at the studio sans tie and with a general air of satorial inelegance the remark that he

didn't spend his fortune on clothes went down well with the audience and drew a hasty explanation from Bing that as he had moved that day he couldn't get to his suitcase. One felt that the contents would scarcely be different anyway - certainly a distinct shortage of ties! Hence the fact that: "Several times I have been refused admittance in some very prominent hotels because I looked a little raggedy!" Thrown out, even. Thus did Bing neatly sidestep what he did with his money.

Still following the "taking chances" theme Bing commented on the films and songs which he might have profitably pursued, and didn't, and those which he had undertaken and were less than successful. It was inevitable that Llew Gardner should raise the question of his private life and specifically Bing's first family. Bing, as he has on other occasions, readily agreed that he went a bit awry, mainly thro' pressure of work when they were young, failing to spend enough time with the first four boys - "All good citizens now," he concluded. Bing went on to his second, now teen-age, family, reacting to the question of being conscious of the fact that as he was not a young man his time was limited with them by replying: "I just want to spend as much time as I can with them. I want to be around long enough to see them develop into useful people - in their talents, that they are kind; that they have good principles, t at they have good sense of humour..... accountability, if only to themselves."

Quoting the facts of a successful career, Llew Gardner then asked why Bing went on, as with the new album. Bing reiterated his reasons which are a liking of the showbiz scene and working with old associates, being around good musicians. He agreed it was probably an "ego trip" insofar as it is nice to know you are still wanted. The aggregate age of himself and Astaire - "a couple of old gaffers" - led into some discussion on their LP and Bing's rapid completion of his other albums as opposed to the length of time that the "pop" groups take to complete one such.

There was reference, too, to Bing's illness of last year: "Did you think at any time tho' 'God! I'm not going to sing again!'" But Bing said that he had not thought of it. "Would that matter to you tremendously if you couldn't?" asked Gardner; "Oh yes," replied Bing, "I get a great kick out of it....I sing a log with my song, Harry. He plays pretty good guitar and piano....he sang with me the other day on the Michael Parkinson Show (hushed silence) - that's on the other network.'" "Never heard of him!" riposted Gardner. "Its an up-and-coming network!" noted Bing.

> The "newcomer" rival in Sinatra sparked off a few minutes of interesting discussion, including the comment Bing made in a SUNDAY EXPRESS interview that he thought Sinatra should come down a tone to retain his dramatic effect. "Tell him I said so..." "You tell him!" said Gardner. "You can tell Frank sump'n...but not much, " answered Bing.

Gardner remarked on the total ease with which Bing tackled anything. Bing attributed this to the fact that nothing he did was important enough to get worked up over. He did relate a story, however, of a time when he did get "flop sweat", as it is known. He was at a Turf Riders' Dinner, at which there is always a great deal of imbibing, when news came that Will Rogers, the great American humourist, had been killed in an airplane accident. Bing was asked to sing Will's favourite song "HOME ON THE RANGE" in an on-the-spot radio memorial programme. Bing couldn't remember other than the first line and his palms became wet with fear, and he got nervous "almost to the point of being ill." But he began the song and the lines came to him as he sang. But he has never been nervous on film sets because of the continual takes. "You once said that you always played Bing Crosby," said Gardner....."I'm not an actor really. I play the same part all the time; every picture!" "But you got an 'Oscar' though.....Yes, but that was a popularity contest - they just said let's give this guy one, he's been around a while." Which is Bing's rubber-stamp reply, always given with genuine modesty.

Meanwhile on Thames Television - shewn in most regions simultaneously - was THE DAY WAR BROKE OUT which was announced as featuring Bing. Taken as a whole the programme was too fragmentary to be wholly fulfilling, but Bing did introduce his own excerpt by means of a recently filmed announcement: "I think it was the first time I had ever performed in England, " said Bing, "There was a lady named Dorothy Dickson who was Mistress of Ceremonies, and a beautiful lady too, very personable....very appealing. There was a tremendous crowd there of all servicemen probably equally divided between American

and British forces, with a few Polish and French there; I was asked to sing and I came up with something. I think it was a song called AMOR, AMOR. Fred Astaire did a bit of a dance, and Bea Lille was there - an old friend of mine and a wonderful performer... great woman of the theatre and the screen. I adore Bea Lille. It was a memorable night for us.

> At that the small screen turned its attention to a film clip of Miss Dickson opening the Stage Door Canteen. "There's a young man here - I didn't quite catch his name - but he's got something he wants to do for you. I think we ought to give him a chance..." The next moment a toupee-less Bing bounded onto the small stage to tremendous applause and indeed sang a chorus of AMOR, AMOR. Bea Lille followed and later there was a younger Fred Astaire dancing and Bob Hope cracking some topical and still funny gags. The implication of the introduction and the juxtaposition of the clips was such that one assumed that Bing was the first performer on stage after the official opening - can anyone confirm this please?

Quite a number of Crosby films have been shown around the regions during the past quarter. Among them are JUST FOR YOU, RIDING HIGH, and HIGH SOCIETY. In the London region we were treated to ANYTHING GOES, the 1956 release version with which Bing created a record by starring in a re-make of a film he had starred in 20 years earlier. It was his last picture for Paramount. Unfortunately it was not shewn at the best possible time for most viewers - 2.30pm on Monday 11th August. Most of us must have seen it but one doesn't like to miss out on the average once-in-three-months cinema scene featuring Bing.

Both TV channels and most regions carried news of Bing and Bob Hope's participation in the Ladies Pro-Am Golf Tournament on 5 August. The reporting varied from region to region, even including the playing of that nos elusive record, STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE. On London ITV Ivor Mills did a ROAD TO SUNNINGDALE type of interview of the star guests. Bing and Bob subsequently indulged in their traditional raillery against each other. It was worth noting that both of them, both septuagenerarians, had competed in three Pro-Ams during the current visit - including one in Holland.

A further pleasant surprise was when London ITV's TODAY programme came up when Sandra Harris, their interviewer, caught Kathryn Crosby "in town tonight" on 12 August. Sandra introduced her guest over the strains of Bing singing I'LL BE SEEING YOU. Basically their conversation was girl-talk insofar as their discussion revolved around the basis of a happy marriage in show-business and Kathy and Bing's long "on-off" engagement. There was some serious discussion on family life relating to the children, and drugs, and sex, mainly on account of the US President's wife's frank and controversial statement the day before.....

> Editor: There is more to come on Bert's BING ON THE BOX. The main event, of course! I think our John Marshall, of Teddington, was mainly responsible for the Jack de Manio interview with Bing. He got involved in some intriguing correspondence with him a few weeks ago and certainly aroused the interest of Jack de Manio. Now back to BERT BISHOP:

"When the blue of the night meets the gold of the day....yes, this is Bing Crosby greeting you on your Monday Bank Holiday! I've a little programme here of some records, some songs, that I consider to be outstanding renditions of these particular songs. Some of them are hits, some of them weren't terrific hits; but they all occupy a very prominent place in my memory and they're songs I've liked very much; Like the one you're going to hear now." Thus began the Radio 2 programme, BING CROSBY, produced by Brian Willey for early afternoon listening on 25 August - 12.02 to 1 pm. with Bing singing the first few bars of Old Blue unaccompanied and impromptu, as it were.

The first track that came up was brother Bob Crosby with his long-established version of SOUTH RAMPART STREET PARADE. In fact, all the chosen records were probably the best-selling recordings of each number, though no doubt most readers will have their own favourite versions. Bing reminisced or commented on each track as he and Brian Willey in-

troduced them. Bing pointed out that he had worked with most of the artists concerned, and altho' I for one could have done without the Dawn pop group few would quarrel with what was, basically, an entertaining hour. Certainly with Bing as the DJ we were spared the inane jargon; and the intervening conversation flowed along in an intelligent and intelligible manner. And of the records Bing played it might be pointed out that all of them were by American artists - with just once exception: Matt Munro singing I GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU VERY WELL. AND SO TO THE MAIN EVENT!

THE PARKINSON SHOW: BBC TV AUGUST 30, 1975.....

BY BERT BISHOP AND THE EDITOR = = = = = = = =

Earlier in this issue we have, rightly so, presented the exciting and excited impressions of readers who were at the tele-recording of this momentous show as seen in the studio. Here is our main TV reviewer, with a little help from his friend the Editor, giving his impressions of how the show appeared from the sitting-room.....

Well, IT ALL CAME TRUE! The things we'd heard from Ken Barnes, Leslie Gaylor, Eric Crowder, John Bignell....everything was TRUE! Indeed, might we refer back to LESLIE BRICE for he did, after all, say it all: This was the definitive Bing, a superb perf-ormance..... Bing looked good (what about those sartorial wisecracks now forsooth), he sounded great, his aplomb, his elan, his sheer personality has surely never before been so brilliantly and completely projected. Dam' it if in some of those medium-long camera shots he didn't look his 30s or 40s self! And it wasn't only the diehard Bing fans who were raving about it all next day: on all sides there was unstinted praise for what had turned out to be a truly superb show - and as was to be expected, incredulous amazement that a man of his undisputed age could not only weather such an exacting hour-plus TV appearance but weather it without the aid of a written note, an "idiot card", or any other of the devices known to be used by some ersatz stars - and genuine stars, too!

And the voice! It really was strong and deep and as melodious as we were hearing it 20 years ago. Nothing short of a miracle seems to have occurred with that most famous of all larynxes!

None of us needed to ring the date in red to remind us that Sat. August 30 was THE night, yet as we entered the 10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - "countdown" stage I ensured a penultimate day visit from the TV engineer to make sure the set was in fine fettle and not likely to let me down; with a small group of family and friends we fidgeted all the way through what seemed to be an interminable MATCH OF THE DAY - and then a distressing news "flash" took us past the scheduled 11pm announcement of the first in a new series billed in the Radio Times as "a special show featuring BING CROSBY who talks about his 50 years in show business and sings some favourite songs".

At last the Parkinson theme tune heralded the long-awaited moment - and there was Parky explaining away the big band - PETE MOORE AND HIS ORCHESTRA - and the carpet on the staircase: "Tonight we are dedicating the programme to a man who is celebrating his 50th year as a top entertainer. Actually top entertainer doesn't quite do him justice because any assessment of the history of show-biz places this man at the summit of the mountain. For five decades he has delighted us with his singing, his acting, but above all, his totally unique style. Ladies and gentlemen: BING CROSBY !!

The camera swung to the special staircase entrance and what was only a moment in time seemed to hang in indefinite limbo before, to the strains of "OLD BLUE" Bing appeared at the top of the stairs, skipped down them and stood alongside Parkinson acknowledging the thunderous greeting our members had assured us they had given Bing. And thunderous and heart-warming it was. It was a typical Bing entrance, cutting a caper en route, which must have immediately reassured any doubting Thomases as to his current fitness and return to vigorous health after his serious operation of last January 12-month. His sartorial elegance would surely have passed muster with Saville Row. Yes, it was Bing

raring to go - and go he most certainly did! Straight into a rumbustious parody of a show-stopping song re-titled "HELLO PARKY!" delivered directly to his host whose beaming countenance reflected the pleasure of his new series' grand introduction in such a unique style....to be immediately followed by Bing quizzically asking: "How come I'm a guest and I'm welcoming YOU back?" To which Parkinson replied: "That was the most eloquent introduction to YOUR show that I've ever had!"

Chatting music and sport - "I'm a singer who plays golf, " decided Bing after being asked which claimed ascendancy - it made fascinating television. The chat was lively and interesting, indeed, fascinating. There was no time for idle inanities, and Bing's ever-lively flow of anecdote and recollection was again in incredible evidence. The merest query from Parkinson produced a vivid, authentic, answer based on colossal experience, and tremendous knowledge, both of life and of show-business. Yet, no matter how far Bing seemed to stray from the original question put by Michael, it was noticeable that he always returned to the answer and so neatly illustrated that answer with his anecdote. Bing must indeed be an interviewer's dream and happily, Michael Parkinson did not find it necessary to go through the "inevitable question" routine that Bing has begun to find rather tedious and tiring.

> Bing began with that story of how he was advised that there were no vacancies at Claridges Hotel the year after being caught in the act of chipping golf balls into a spittoon by the elevator along the carpeted corridor by a couple of Daily Mail reporters, complete with camera.....

Even his surgery was humorously dismissed with the comment that "my range has been limited as a result, but the quality is still there....its still gravel!" though he felt that by stopping smoking his voice had improved and in passing, it was unusual to see Bing in this way without his pipe "trademark", Some clinical description of the difference between trained singers and "throat " singers had Bing on the edge of his seat gesticulating airily with his arms - another prominent aspect of his very active showing on this programme. Yes, indeed, though his traditional "relaxation" was well in evidence, Bing displayed a spritely youthfulness which turned back the clock in no uncertain fashion.

Parkinson: Have you ever kept track of how many songs you've recorded?

Bing: No, but I keep thinking I ought to do that. Once in a while I get some correspondence from some people over here that are loyal to my "cause" ....like Leslie Gaylor from down in the Isle of Wight - and he says three thousand and something, but I don't know, I think that's a lot; doesn't seem like I could have made that many.....

In those words Bing paid tribute to the ICC and its many members who try to collate all his recorded career and spotlighted his most persistent and faithful amateur promotor and fan, our own LESLIE GAYLOR. Leslie, a publicity officer of the ICC is surely most deserving of this unique, broadcast, recognition from Bing and I am sure it was with the greatest pleasure that our members heard Bing speak his name. And indeed, it was most noticeable that though it was done in the most unobtrusive manner - yet more telling perhaps because of that - Bing also paid considerable tribute to Ken Barnes and Pete Moore. Indeed, Bing made a great point several times to compliment the orchestra and showed it was no mere lip-service.

Bing went on to make some rather ambiguous comment about the song THAT OLD BLACK MAGIC which gave the impression that he didn't sing this song in the film HERE COME THE WAVES. Of course he did - but Bing no doubt meant he didn't make a big thing of this song by recording it, an omission he regrets - and so do I. Great song.

Another great standard which Bing was surprised to learn he had never recorded was BREEZING ALONG WITH THE BREEZE and as a result it was included in the new album we have just received,....and as a mouthwatering foretaste Bing, after asking where was "the equipment" strolled over to the stage centre to where a hand-mike lay upon a stool; Bing picked it up and listened with obvious interest as the orchestra played a quite unusual introduction which proved to be the basis of the accompaniment to the song. It is, obviously, tempting to say that Bing breezed his way thro' this catchy standard - but

that's exactly how he did take it! pausing to give Pete Moore a nod during the vocal rest. His voice was clear and true and the free-range camera pulled in on some very good close-ups. All the familiar facial expressions were there—updrawn eyebrows, a quick rock of the head; and the "b's" and "p's" bursting from those angled and faintly smiling lips, with a strong and resonant tone. At that range the lines in his face showed - but they are lines, it seems to me, of cheeriness rather than weariness. He took the sustained applause with an apparent mixture of surpise and pleasure and resumed his seat, throwing off any credit as being due entirely to the orchestra....."he builds you up with that band. If you can't get pumped up with that you ought to leave town."

> Naturally, the clock did have to be turned back - to the 30s and covered some of his youthful days haunting the record stores - around 1921 or 22 as Bing recalled - for all the latest big band arrangements which he and his "Juicy Seven" colleagues promptly copied for use at college functions and the like. The legendary greats of jazz tripped off Bing's tongue so naturally - we studied again this man who worked with Bix, Venuti, Lang, Trumbauer and realised all over again the tremendous career he has had, a link even yet with the fabulous jazz era of long ago that the jazz fans still rave over. Just the vaguest hint from Parkinson - who surely has never had it so good! - had Bing chatting freely away without any 'ums and ers' so often a feature of a guesting interviewee pausing to recall or phrase a sentence. Bing's casual conversation comes over in such telling fashion - it is, in effect, seemingly casual - but one could sense the studio audience and the watching millions, absolutely hanging on his every word. Nevertheless, Bing not unnaturally sometimes gets the occasional fact about himself wrong - or he believes some of the stuff written about him!

For example, the influence of composers on his career brought the never-to-beomitted reponse from Bing that Irving Berlin had had the greatest. Bing spoke as if WHITE CHRISTMAS had been the foundation of his career. While one would never deny its great importance to Bing (how can one deny the significance of a 30-million selling record?) the fact remains that Bing Crosby had been a world-shaking star of records, radio, and screen for at least 10 years before "WHITE CHRISTMAS" came along. Indeed, it could be argued that Berlin, great as he undoubtedly is, had little influence on Bing's meteoric rise to universal fame prior to that extraordinary recording and the film which brought it about. However, Bing talked fondly of Irving Berlin and his delightful "mickey mouse" piano-playing of his songs - including the special piano that could change key!

Tribute was also paid by Bing to Hoagy Carmichael - and brought one of the funniest dead-pan tributes from Bing: "He sings one of his songs and it sounds great....when you come to do it you find there's nothing there...." Bing didn't mean "STARDUST", of course! But he did, spontaneously, burst into some lyrics from "WASHBOARD BLUES" which brought applause from the audience and which was clearly quite unexpected to Bing....especially, as he said, he hadn't heard it in about 150 years." The song of course, not the applause! Then Sammy Cahn was mentioned, and Cole Porter and this led into an anecdote of recent vintage concerning Fred Astaire and the new album they'd just made together - "A SHOOTING BOX IN SCOTLAND". This had been selected by Ken Barnes and when Fred saw it he said he and his sister Adele had first sung it in 1916. Its a sort of WE'RE A COUPLE OF SWELLS number to which Ken and Bing have added some great new lines. This led to Bing remarking that he felt composers were restricted by lack of opportunity today - there not being the wealth of shows these days. Baccarach, Hal David, Sondheim, Paul Williams and Rod McKuen ("a poet") found great favour with Bing - reflections which led into Bing's second song - "SEND IN THE CLOWNS".

> Now, for me, this could easily be the big hit of the new album. It is a poignant song with a quite haunting melodic construction. I am not surprised to learn that there was a re-shuffle of the tracks on the first LP ("THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT") to include this song. And how beautifully, even movingly, Bing sings it - on the album and on the TV show! His tones were rich yet tender, his eyes soulful; fully deserving of the long applause which greeted his great rendering - and during this applause his compulsive musicality had him quietly still singing. A great moment of the show.

Bing dismissed his own lyric writing: "I can add something to a good idea....not create"

Nonetheless, his name appears in the credits of several songs over the years. Parkinson brought up Bing's fame for "ad-libbing" which, perhaps surprisingly, had Bing recalling one of his most famous "fluffs" - "WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS" and actually singing those concluding lines - amended just slightly so as not to cause too much offence.Bing did state his astonishment that these "records" had survived. People came up to him and said, presumably with a leer "....I've got THAT record!" During all this conversation Bing was at his bantering, deprecating best and the jokes and asides flowed freely and with modest panache. But he had a short break about here from chat and singing whilst a clip from BLUE SKIES showing him hoofing with Fred Astaire was shown - "A COUPLE OF SONG AND DANCE MEN" - such being the title also of their newly-recorded LP. At this point a siren-blasting vehicle passed by the TV theatre - but I bet few among the audience noticed it!

> Parkinson referred to Bing's reputation as "one-take Crosby" and Bing agreed he would try and get away with one take - if he had a golf date! But added that when he had "something to do" with Fred - or Sinatra, he "got prepared" and ready because he didn't want to go in and look bad!

Then it was time for another song from Bing: a charming and simple little ballad with great appeal called I LOVE TO DANCE LIKE THEY USED TO DANCE from the TV show QUEEN OF THE STARDUST BALLROOM. Perhaps Bing was a little too casual with this one but I guess its a song inviting a "throwaway" approach - yet he did slip in a little touch of the Astaires whilst singing! Bing noted afterwards that modern dancing as performed by the kids is so impersonal that "they don't go near one another - you could 'phone it in, really.." He also agreed with Michael that the kids are processed to buy records these days - showing a lack of discrimination which is only too obvious.

Bing related his "rubber-string violin" days with the legendary Whiteman orchestra and his unappreciated oompahs on the peck-horn. Oft-told tales but still a delight to hear when visually supported ...."bands just didn't have singers in those days...someone in the band was expected to do it." There followed Bing the "family man" - and even here he couldn't be serious for long. Telling of his disciplinary methods he concluded by saying "I don't think I've hit one of 'em in ten or fifteen minutes!" After speaking of his sons' prowess at golf there was a lead into Bing singing with young Harry, complete with guitar, the family "heirloom" duet of "PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY". While this was a happy, off-the-cuff little interlude which did, nevertheless, illustrate the boy's capabilities as a guitarist, it was clearly not the "finished product" which would be put on commercial record - and any comparison with the recorded duet of"Gary and friend" would be fatuous. Harry also appeared as a handsome young lad!

Parkinson, very much a film buff, was keen to have Bing talk of the early days in Hollywood, and Bing obliged by conveying the sense of fun and lack of a truly business-like approach which pervaded and encompassed the folk on the film lots in those halcyon days. Carole Lombard was recalled as being a beautiful woman who could cuss and get away with it - and Bing related the story of how at the conclusion of WE'RE NOT DRESSING Carole bought the recalcitrant bear used in the film and tied it to the front porch of Norman Turog, director of the film who had had so much trouble with the bear....we heard of Marion Davies with her private orchestra on set and the benevolent William Randolph Hearst.

> The recollection of JUDY GARLAND by Bing had him reiterating his professional affection for her, and that for him she was the greatest feminine all-round performer.

It was a racing certainty, to coin a phrase, that Johnny Mercer's name would come up, seeing he is again associated with Bing on the new album. It led to the following dialogue:

BING: He's on this new album - and I made some other songs way back with him.
Parkinson: Well, its a pity he couldn't be here tonight to do them with you.
BING: What's the matter with you? You can do this song...its a great song. From a show called GOOD COMPANIONS with John Mills. Have you heard the song?
Parkinson? You know this is my singing debut don't you...
BING: But you'll be sensational...this will open up a new career for you!
Parkinson: Maestro..you'll be kind, won't you?

And with a nervous hesitancy which showed through, despite the rehearsal, Parky rose to his feet with Bing and in one glorious minute of song Parky realised a lifetime's ambition by duetting with his famous guest. Parky is not going to make it as a solo, but it proved great fun all round - the song was, of course, THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY. And when Parkinson declared his ambition realised, Bing said his was, too - to which Michael rejoined that Bing was "a silver-tongued smoothie" or words to that effect.

The host then suggested that for all Bing's 50 years in show business Bing was looking great; much better, in fact, than when he appeared on the show previously, and that he was looking good for another 50 years. And we were all delighted to note that Bing was most certainly looking very well, very fit. They then passed on to experiences with autograph hunters - Bing doesn't get bothered much in L$_o$s Angeles, bit more in New York... and he went on to repeat what we've heard on other radio chats on the subject. However, one anecdote came as fresh to me:

> BING: I was up in Scotland for the Open; and they sent some little kids over for my autograph. So I'd say 'What's my name?' "I don't know' -(and Bing illustrated the childrens' dilemma at not knowing.) So I'd sign Angus McClean - and then I'd watch them go back to their mother..."

Parky's contribution was that when he was recently asked for his autograph by a woman she told him: "Youknow, you'd be a lot better looking if you got your bloody hair cut!"

> Bing concluded this truly fabulous programme with some philosophical remarks arising from a resume of his 50 years in the business: "I think a youngster... it couldn't hurt him at all to listen a lot and talk less. Because you never hear anything when you're talking..." You can't get better advice than this, I reckon. Bing also took the opportunity to say again how lucky he had been; that he wouldn't make it today....there was only Columbo, Dick Powell and one or two others around in his day, not the hordes of good singers there are today. He indicated he didn't think he would stand a chance. Well, Bing may believe this. He seems to - but for my money there were just as many aspiring singers around when Bing started as there are today. But then no-talent voices and amateurism didn't have the vogue they seemingly have today.

Then we suddenly realised that this programme really was drawing to its close - how DID the time fly past like it did? And Bing was picking up the mike again and we were hearing again the song that Bing said he doesn't necessarily lay down as a firm philosophical personal biography but that it was a good song, expressing some of the things he felt - THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT. I also noticed that despite,unusually for him, using a hand microphone, Bing did not hold it particularly close to his lips. In fact, it was often eighteen inches to two feet away! Unlike so many performers who sing as if the microphone is actually attached to their mouth!

> The charisma of Crosby is such that today it touches most everbody; as it always has. A wonderful artist, of such insousiance that he is naturally endearing. How pleased I have been by the remarks of uncommitted and unbiassed friends and neighbours concerning this show. It really was a "smash" with the general public and will have undoubtedly been a great boost for all who have worked for a truly successful 50th anniversary year for Bing - not least, of course, for the man who has, and still is, giving us so much pleasure.

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Editor: Honesty compels me to amit that my contribution to the above was minimal.Bert, in his usual thorough manner, seems to have covered that tremendous show completely. And though many members will have recorded the show - some even on video-tape, the lucky so-and-so's! - it is well that we record it all here - for posterity!

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JOHN JOYCE, 16, The Square, New Invention, Willenhall, West Midlands states he has 200 Bing 78s all in excellent condition for which he will accept the nearest to £100. He will not separate the collection and buyer collects.

WILL YE NO' COME BACK AGEN?

The answer is YES Bing will, as we have read, assuredly return to Bonnie Scotland.

It was to Scotland that Bing went first, hasting as it were, with his two sons, to the golf courses and the lochs and braes - and to the incredibly warm greeting of the Scottish people. Away from the ballyhoo of London, the recording studios, and the Parkinson Show, Bing for certain was no less surrounded by throngs of well-wishers in Scotland - and the tremendous press coverage of his activities was a measure of the delight experienced at the maestro's presence. It led too to another invasion from South of the Border too. It is a matter for conjecture, possibly, whether or not Bing likes cameras popping just as he is about to putt - no criticism of those who indulged in these activities! If I'd been there I'd have been just as busy. One wonders, also, whether Bing's interpolation, with Johnny Mercer, of a distinctly Scottish flavour in THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY was just chance. My guess is that it was a special gesture to the braw lads and lassies of Scotland who strongly vie with any other part of Britain in their affection and loyalty to Bing. And in passing it may be worth pointing out that with Bing's ancestral connection with Ireland, his obvious delight with Scotland, and his necessary activities in England the only part of the Sceptred Isle not yet, to my knowledge, visited - is WALES, the land of song! We must endeavour to rectify this startling omission - there are one or two golf courses in the Principality - and quite a picturesque racecourse at Chepstow! Fancy hearing Bing singing with the Treorchy, or the Morriston, Male Voice Choir..... However, we are on the subject of Scotland.

> So many of our friends up there had a wonderful time meeting Bing that it is, alas, quite impossible to print all of them. We would need a magazine of encyclopaedic proportions to do that. But, we're going to try and include as many impressions as possible, and hope the writers will bear with us in the necessity for, sometimes, severe editing.

Old friend JAMES DINEEN who, living in Glasgow, had a head start was quickly on The Road to Turnberry.....he writes: I had three great days taking film of the maestro and his two sons - Mary Frances is the only one I now have to meet. Leaving Glasgow around 9.30 I was at the Turnberry Hotel by soon after 11 and was told by a most helpful gardener that Bing and his two lads were out on the course; he also told me where he thought they would be by then. I found myself driving up an incredibly barrow road to the 8th green - so narrow that one had to stop and let pedestrians squirm round the car! But I had been well directed...for arriving at the eighth I saw Bing and his boys making for the 9th fairway. I noted immediately that Bing was looking very fit and bronzed - and my goodness, what colourful gear he was wearing! Bright red cardigan, bright pink slacks and an equally bright yellow hat! What a character - yet the two boys seemed quite sombrely dressed. I started taking my pictures immediately, using the zoom lens so as not to disturb them by getting too close - when to my stuttering astonishment Bing called me over and asked if I would do HIM a favour? He wanted me to go back to the clubhouse and get his camera. I stammered that I certainly would...and probably broke some speed records back to the clubouse. I collected the camera from someone there with no trouble and was soon back on the ninth. Bing wanted me to take some pictures of him and the boys - he wanted particularly one with the lighthouse behind them. I was only too happy to oblige, and then Bing surprised me again by handing the camera to Harry and asking him to take a further picture of himself - WITH YOURS TRULY! Bing never misses out on consideration...never. Then they return to their golf and I carried on discreetly filming. That first day I spent 3½ hours with them.

Back in the clubhouse, while Bing was changing (only his shoes, not the psychedelic gear) I spotted Nathanial buying a dark green V-neck pullover....I told the assistant, and Nat, it would be a great pleasure to me to present it to him as a gift! He must have told his Dad for Bing subsequently came across to me with a broad smile on his face and insisted I write my name and address on an envelope for him so that he could send me prints of the pictures that had been taken. They left soon after, motoring back to the hotel...and I motored home with 150 feet of film! I had been able to show Bing several photographs which interested him considerably. One was of him with Glenn Miller taken August 1944, the month before Glenn vanished with his plane over the English Channel. Another large picture to interest Bing was one with him and Pat Kirkwood, also August 1944 vintage.

Bing animatedly told the boys about those days and the fun he'd had during recording sessions with the Glenn Miller band - recordings we all sadly know vanished with Glenn. The pictures were further autographed by Bing and the boys.

The second day I teamed up with Frank Grant who is assuredly one of the most prolific of all the great Crosby collectors and during the day we met many more prominent members of British Crosbyana.....Peter Monaghan and his delightful family; and over from Falkirk came dear old Ninian Faichney. Ninian was accompanied by a new, younger friend - in his 20s I would say...and enthusiastic to become a member of the Crosby Circle. So, what with meeting old Crosby friends and Bing and family it can be imagined what a three days I had. But, sadly, it had to end....and Bing had to make for England. It seemed to me even the weather went dull when Bing left....,meantime, all of us up here say: HASTE YE BACK BING! And, happily, we have every reason to believe he will do just that.

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ALAN CHADWICK of Hartley Wintney, Nr. Basingstoke and PHIL CLARKE of Stamshaw, Portsmouth had to make a 10-hour virtually non-stop safari to Scotland! Between them they wrote:

> We set out for Dalmahoyon the Thursday evening, Phil, his wife and I...but we discovered about Bing's Turnberry appearance and altered course! Through our night-long drive we were very, very tired but somehow weariness evaporated when we got to Turnberry. I'm sure, too, we did not imagine that there was an excited atmosphere there. We FELT it! We met Jimmy Hill, Bobby Charlton, Alan Ball and other prominent footballers who we imagined were taking part in the tournament and having a "loosener".

Enquiries from publicity officers at the Turnberry course told us Bing was indeed in the hotel opposite and had been there some days! We adjourned to the hotel for coffee (which you may like to know, cost £1.10p for three cups!) but the bonus was that the Head Porter endeavoured to contact Bing for us....it seems Bing was due to travel to a place called Straiton to do some filming for a TV commercial at 10.15. As it was then 10.05 we retired outside to await Bing....and almost immediately we saw that so familiar face beneath a bright yellow hat....we filmed Bing entering his car and endeavoured to follow but lost his car in the traffic. We reached Straiton to find Bing was already in the Black Bull Hotel filming with some of the "locals" - and we were too late to get inside.

After a time Bing re-appeared - to a really tumultuous welcome. Amid tremendous enthusiasm he was presented with a silver tankard which he held up to show to all of us. Bing was full of animated conversation, asking all kinds of questions such as whether there were plenty of pheasant and grouse in these parts? Seems Bing did a "commercial" for Tennants lager - another TV appearance to watch for!

> We left a cartridge with Bing's chauffer and suggested he played it on the way back to Turnberry....we subsequently learned that Bing - it was 40s material - had asked him to turn it off as it was too old!

We spotted Bing again later but were told by a course official that it would be appreciated if we left filming until the next day. Fair enough, Bing was entitled to some serious practice

The next day, with Bing due to tee-off according to the board, at 11.30 we were there early. Spotting Bing on the hotel terrace we made for him for all the world like three teen-agers. Whilst signing autographs for us we mentioned that his new "single" had been played - at 7 am - that morning - and had he heard it. "No," he laughed, "I was in the land of nod at that time!"

Soon after the tournament was on and Bing was giving interviews to the press, being followed around and making remarks and wisecracks galore. Asked where Bob Hope was he thought he might be in an oxygen tent.....missing a putt he sang a snatch of JUST ONE MORE CHANCE...he serenaded a buxom young lady with SWEET LEILANI...and I SURRENDER, DEAR! Asked by someone about his latest record Bing pointed to Phil Clarke and said: "Best ask him - he knows all about it!" The way Bing went round that course

TO "BING PICTURES" on p.25 please add: Bing, London, 1975, 6 unique poses with Vera Lynn and Fred Astaire and one with Michael Parkinson. Total of 7 matt finish postcards: £2.00. British equivalent for overseas members.

itself a test of stamina, with the attendant need to smile, chat, wisecrack and put on his "public" face was a really incredible performance. It has been said that Bing signed around 3,000 autographs that day and the crowd following him around was never less than a thousand! The press was full of stories about him and his visits to local restaurants, shops &c. and even giving impromptu vocal renditions to the patrons. A day to remember for ever....

Then there was Mrs. MARGARET McCUNE, 34 High Carnegie Rd., Port Glasgow who had what must surely have been a remarkable experience: I got your address from an Irishman I met at Turnberry on July 5 when Bing was there....I have always been a great fan of his. To me, there is no one like him and I was delighted, to say the least, when I saw him that day. To me it was certainly a dream come true. I only wished I had had the nerve to speak to him...but I got some great pictures. At ONE TIME HE SAT BESIDE ME! I would like to hear from you about the Circle....I should like Bing's life story and any information at all. Margaret McCune.

See front of this issue about BING by Charles Thompson: another way to learn ALL about Bing is to read this magazine...but fancy sitting NEXT to Bing....and not talking. And I wonder which of our Irishmen Margaret talked to? Anyway, we're glad to welcome her...

The new "younger friend" of NINIAN FAICHNEY (and any friend of Ninian's is automatically a friend of ours!) is JIM DOUGLAS of 72 McLachlan Str., Larbert, Stirlingshire. Jim, unusually, is a sound expert in the literal sense and runs a business that is, he wryly admits, a long way from Crosbyana. He runs a modern discotheque service! And pumps out 1000 watts amplification! Ah well...but there is no doubting his Bing-enthusiasm and he thoughtfully kept me well supplied with the Scottish press reports &c. Just to show how wide are his interests, anyone interested in GUY MITCHELL is invited to get in touch with Jim, who also writes: "There is one recording of Bing, with Carmen Cavallaro that I would very much like to obtain. If any of the members have a duplicate copy of THE FOUR WINDS AND THE SEVEN SEA in reasonable condition I would be pleased, also, to hear from them." This is a rare and unusual record which I like very much - though it IS rather mournful - and is, I fear, unlikely to appear on album....Editor.

PETER MONAGHAN, "Crosbyana" 25 Weir Avenue, Barrhead, Glasgow, is mentioned above by James Dineen as being at Turnberry - and to prove it Peter sent me a lovely colour picture of Bing, Nathanial and Peter's two children - Edward and 2½-year-old Anna Marieset (what a lovely name). Peter writes: "We motored - the children and my wife Anna - to Turnberry and after surprisingly little hanging about, managed to meet Bing and have a long chat. He strode over to us, shook hands with Anna and myself and said "Hello" to the children. My wife remarked on how fit he looked and Bing replied: I am feeling great and enjoying my golf. He readily agreed to my taking some pictures - and as luck would have it Nathaniel appeared, a nice, unassuming boy. What can one say about this really incredible man, Bing, who is never discourteous and always has a friendly word for you, although, goodness knows, he must get tired of being mobbed by autograph hunters and such when looking forward to getting on to the golf course.

We went again on the Saturday....this time accompanied by my brother and his wife - my brother, incidentally, is a Perry Como fan but he was as anxious as anybody to meet Bing. And he did - and we went round the course with that great Scottish golfer Bernard Gallacher.....a memorable week-end with the Scottish weather at its glorious best...and now we have some great movie shots to pore over.

Editor: Well, regretfully, that has got to be it! We're only too painfully aware that much has had to be omitted - like, for instance, our good friend Mrs. PHYLLIS HARRIS of Pangbourne who ran Michael Parkinson to earth - on a golf course to try and get tickets for his show! She finally got 'em from John Fisher.... and now Phyllis has asked a good question: WHY NOT A BROACH FOR THE LADY MEMBERS OF THE ICC! Excellent..... More of that later, however. Happy reading - and here's to the next issue.